



Translated from the Russian by [illegible]

MALUMUD ATA ALLA

# Arab Struggle for Economic Independence

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Translated from the Russian by Bernard Isaacs

МАЛУМУД АТА АЛЛА  
БОРЬБА АРАБОВ  
ЗА ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКУЮ НЕЗАВИСИМОСТЬ  
*На английском языке*

*First printing 1974*

© Издательство «Прогресс», 1974 г.  
© Translation into English. Progress Publishers 1974

*Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*

M 11104—163  
014(01)—74 48—72

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# PREFACE

The present international situation is characterised by an unprecedented expansion of the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of the former colonies. A growing tendency is clearly in evidence among the peoples who have recently thrown off the yoke of colonialism to shape their future along the path of non-capitalist development, which would enable them to overcome their economic backwardness inherited from the colonial past and create the conditions for a transition to socialism.

This tendency owes its origin to the important changes which have taken place in the world and mirrors the character of our epoch—the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism, the enhanced prestige and impact of the socialist system, which has now become a determining factor in the development of mankind.

"The main thing is that the struggle for national liberation in many countries has in practical terms begun to grow into a struggle against exploitative relations, both feudal and capitalist," said L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, at the 24th Party Congress.

"Today, there are already quite a few countries in Asia and Africa which have taken the non-capitalist way of development, that is, the path of building a socialist society in the long term. Many states have now taken this path. Deep-going social changes, which are in the interests of the masses of people, and which lead to a strengthening of national

independence, are being implemented in these countries and the number of these changes has been growing at an ever increasing rate. The Afro-Asian peoples who have thrown off the colonial yoke and embarked upon the road of independence and progress represent an important detachment of the world revolutionary movement, and their activities have led to a new stage in the present-day nature of the national liberation movement and the struggle between the two social systems. The Twenty-fourth Congress of the CPSU has clearly recognised the historical prospect of a non-capitalist path of development for the liberated countries as an alternative to capitalism, and it has urged the peoples of these countries to follow this path.

The sixties witnessed significant changes in the alignment of forces in Asia and Africa. Forty-four former colonies and 11 forces in Asia and Africa have taken the path of independence and progress, and the number of these changes has been growing at an ever increasing rate. The Afro-Asian peoples who have thrown off the colonial yoke and embarked upon the road of independence and progress represent an important detachment of the world revolutionary movement, and their activities have led to a new stage in the present-day nature of the national liberation movement and the struggle between the two social systems. The Twenty-fourth Congress of the CPSU has clearly recognised the historical prospect of a non-capitalist path of development for the liberated countries as an alternative to capitalism, and it has urged the peoples of these countries to follow this path.

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independence, are being implemented in these countries, and the number of these changes has been growing as time goes on."<sup>1</sup>

The Afro-Asian peoples who have thrown off the colonial yoke and embarked upon the road of independence and progress represent an important detachment of the world revolutionary movement.

Analysing the present-day nature of the national liberation movement and the struggle between the two social systems, the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU confidently reconfirmed the historical prospect of a non-capitalist path of development for the liberated countries as an alternative to capitalism.

The sixties witnessed significant changes in the alignment of forces in Asia and Africa. Forty-four former colonies and semi-colonies won political independence. Some 2,000 million people have been delivered from the yoke of colonialism. Thirty-five million people are still in colonial bondage and are carrying on an armed struggle for their liberation.

An important result of the peoples' revolutionary struggle for independence is the socialist orientation of a number of young states in Asia and Africa. Such leading states of the Arab world as Egypt, Syria, Algeria and Iraq have embarked upon a path of independent development and officially proclaimed a socialist course, and have already achieved their first successes in carrying out deep-going socio-economic reforms.

Arab states taking the path of non-capitalist development are making a real contribution to the cause of the anti-imperialist struggle. There are few such states yet and they are encountering no few difficulties in their development. But these difficulties cannot belittle the importance of the main fact that a start has been given to an essentially new tendency in the development of the liberated Arab countries. And their example will be all the more convincing the more successful the revolutionary democratic Arab countries are in developing the economy and culture and the more fully the advantages of the non-capitalist path will be demonstrated.

However, of many Arab countries that have won their

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, pp. 23-24.

independence it can be said that their further path has not yet clearly shaped itself. A struggle for the future is going on there between the progressive forces and the internal reactionaries who are supported by imperialism. In these countries the process of internal social cleavage is gaining in depth. The working people are demanding reforms capable of effectually solving their vital problems.

At the same time the upper crust of the national bourgeoisie, motivated by their own class interests, are opposed to social progress and to the prosecution of a consistently anti-imperialist line. On this basis a sharp class struggle is developing.

The young republican regimes in the Sudan, Libya, South and North Yemen and Mauritania are fighting hard against the intrigues of the neo-colonialist and reactionary forces in an endeavour to assert their national independence and territorial integrity and place their natural resources at the service of the people. These countries are also an important stronghold of the Arab national liberation movement. In other parts of the Arab world, where imperialism and neo-colonialism, with the collaboration of the local ruling classes, are still able to stem the tide of the popular movement, the fight by the progressive democratic forces is being waged unabated under difficult conditions.

In recent years, owing to its military, political and economic support of the Israeli aggressors, the USA stands noticeably isolated in the Arab world. American imperialism, however, is constantly resorting to all kinds of manoeuvres in an attempt to convince world public opinion of its desire to secure stability and peace in the Middle East.

The American monopolies are trying to disunite the Arab countries, to force them into making unilateral concessions and capitulate to the aggressors. The economic aid which they promise is virtually used as a further means of establishing the political and economic domination of American imperialism in the Middle East.

In such a political situation the problems confronting the liberated countries are, on the whole, complex and multi-form. It is a matter of making good the independence which these countries have won, building up an independent national economy and overcoming the backwardness inherited from



the past. All this can be achieved only by way of progressive social development and a consistent struggle against imperialism, by way of alliance with the socialist countries and the international labour movement.

The Arab liberation movement is playing an outstanding role in the battle against world imperialism, states the Document adopted at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow on June 17, 1969. "It is exerting a positive influence on the entire movement against imperialism and neo-colonialism in the Middle East and Africa. The struggle of the Arab peoples against imperialism and the Israeli aggression is a part of the general struggle between the forces of freedom and socialism throughout the world, on the one hand, and world imperialism, on the other.

"The growth of the movement for national liberation, and the social progress of the peoples in this strategically important and oil-rich area, evokes the violent hatred of the imperialists and the oil monopolies, which are weaving a web of intrigues and plots against this movement, and resorting to wars and aggressive actions."<sup>1</sup>

The Arab nations live on a territory of 13,100,000 square kilometres adjoining the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa, a territory slightly larger than the whole European continent.

About 29 per cent of this territory is on the Asiatic continent, and 71 per cent in Africa. It stretches some 6,000 kilometres from east to west, that is, from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean, and about 4,000 kilometres from north to south, from the northern boundaries of Syria to the south of the Sudan.

These countries are situated mainly in the subtropical mediterranean climatic zone. Geographically and historically they are divided into the Maghreb and the Mashraq groups of Arab countries. The population in 1972 was about 140,000,000, of whom 68 per cent lives in Arab Africa and 32 per cent in Arab Asia. About ten million Arabs lead a nomad or semi-nomad life (about four million in the Arabian

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, Prague, 1969, pp. 27-28.*

Peninsula, two million in Iraq, Syria and Jordan, and three million in the Sudan). About 80 per cent of the population derive a livelihood from agriculture and 19 per cent live in the towns. The largest cities are Cairo (5,200,000) and Alexandria (1,800,000), Casablanca (1,000,000), Algiers, Damascus, Haleb, Beirut, Baghdad and Tunis.

The impact of the Arab countries on world politics and economics is determined by their geographic location. These countries occupy the whole southern coast of the Mediterranean, almost completely encompass the Red Sea and border on the Atlantic and Indian oceans.

International shipping routes run through these seas and oceans connecting Europe with Asia and Africa. Here, too, is the Suez Canal—the central link between these routes. Seven international air, rail and motor routes of great strategic importance pass through these Arab countries.

Of the nineteen sovereign Arab states eleven (Iraq, Syria, the Lebanon, the Yemen Arab Republic, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the ARE, the Sudan, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Mauritania) are republics, and eight (Jordan, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the Allied Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Morocco) are monarchies. West Sahara and a number of Arab territories are under the domination of Spain. But even there, under the blows of the national liberation movement, the days of colonialism are numbered.

"Today imperialism is the greatest threat to the freedom and independence of the peoples of the former colonies as well," said L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. "Even today, after the collapse of the foundations of imperialism's colonial system, the pillaging of the natural resources and the exploitation of the labour of the population of the weaker and less developed countries remains an inalienable feature of imperialism, although the imperialists are now compelled to act more craftily and disguise their pillage."<sup>1</sup>

The Arab lands are immensely rich in natural resources. Those of oil alone are greater than the combined oil resources

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 143.*



of all the industrial capitalist countries. The American, British and other monopolies have laid greedy hands on this wealth. Suffice it merely to mention that three quarters of the oil imported into Western Europe comes from the Arab lands.

In 1972 the monopolies pumped out of the Arab countries about 820,000,000 tons of oil, which is one-third of the whole capitalist world's annual production. Practically all the oil is exported in the crude form. This great oil-producing area has about 6 per cent of the capacities of the capitalist oil-refining industry.

Thanks to the remarkable productiveness of the oil wells and as a result of the ruthless exploitation of the Arab workers the oil tycoons are annually pocketing millions of dollars in profit.

Suffice it to mention that every dollar invested in the oil industry of the Arab countries is recovered within 8-14 months, after which there is a run of clear profit. During the last twenty years the American oil companies invested a little over 1,500 million dollars in the Middle East and pumped out net profits to the sum of about 12,000 million dollars.

The determination of the foreign oil monopolies to retain control of Middle East oil is one of the main reasons for the imperialist adventurism and the tension that has built up in this area of the globe.

In some of the Arab countries the foreign oil companies are a state within a state, as it were.

This is borne out, among other things, by the privileges which they enjoy in various Arab countries. They are exempt from many of the taxes paid by Arab nationals, they can build their own roads and pipelines, have their own air, telegraph and television lines, build airfields, ports and railways, own landed property for such construction, and enjoy the right of free import and export of goods for their companies without customs examination. All this undoubtedly limits the sovereignty of the Arab countries concerned.

Moreover, the foreign oil companies, by advancing loans and by other means, exercise a definite influence on the policies of the local governments.

The blow dealt to the oil monopolies by the nationalisation of Iraq Petroleum Company in the summer of 1972 and the general change in the market situation in favour of the oil-

exporting countries compelled the oil monopolies to make a few important concessions. In the autumn of 1972, agreement was reached on a staged takeover by the oil-producing countries of controlling interest in the concessioner companies.

The foreign monopolies in the Arab countries exploit other natural resources besides oil. About 15,000,000 tons of iron ore is mined here. Algeria, as an exporter of iron ore, comes next in rank to Sweden, France and the USA. Algerian resources are estimated at 2,500 million tons. The Arab countries, especially those of the Maghreb group, are rich in cobalt, lead and zinc ores, manganese, phosphates, copper, tin, chrome, nickel, etc. They also have rare-earth elements and precious metals.

The mining of all these minerals is conditioned largely by the requirements of the capitalist world market, that is, of the foreign monopolies, and not by the interests of the Arab countries themselves.

The rise of the national liberation movement in the Arab countries coincided with the beginning of colonial seizures as a legitimate protest of the Arabs against colonial enslavement. In the course of decades the conditions in which the national liberation movement developed among the Arabs underwent changes; new social classes joined the movement, the national consciousness grew, the forms and methods of struggle and the ideology of the movement changed, but in simple terms it all boiled down to a desire on the part of the Arabs to be masters in their own house and live in conditions befitting a human being.

The European states had long been pursuing a policy of conquest towards the Arab countries. They strove to possess themselves of those countries' natural and human resources, to capture markets there for the sale of their commodities, and capital investment spheres, and to use these countries as a springboard in the struggle for world supremacy. The colonial carve-up of the Arab countries gave rise to bitter rivalry between the capitalist countries, each of which was out to seize for itself a bigger piece of the cake. They tore the Arab countries away one by one from the Ottoman Empire and turned them into their own colonies. France's annexation of Algeria in 1830, Britain's occupation of Egypt in 1882 and the seizure of the Sudan in 1899, French colonialist enslave-



ment of Tunisia in 1881, the Italian invasion of Tripoli (Libya) in 1911, the partition of Morocco between France and Spain in 1912—all this was carried out by the foreign aggressors in a hard struggle with the Arab peoples.

The economic oppression and dominance of the foreign monopolies aroused intense resentment among the workers and peasants in the Arab countries. The dominance of foreign capital infringed upon the interests of the national bourgeoisie as well. No less resentment among the Arabs was aroused by the political oppression of the foreign invaders, since the Arab peoples were deprived of elementary political rights. The existing laws concerning the "freedom" of speech, the press, association, etc., contained various reservations by use of which the colonialists banned the publication of progressive newspapers, the holding of meetings and conduct of activities by one or another national organisation, threw people into prison without trial or investigation and hounded progressive leaders. Foreign bankers, officials and officers set the law at defiance and acted high-handedly. They trod under foot the national pride of the Arabs, prevented their intercourse with the outside world, tried to break their traditional friendly ties with other nations and countries, fanned religious animosity and crushed the national culture.

The Arabs, really, were not masters in their own house. All this determined the character of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist movement in the Arab countries.

All the major classes of society fought colonialism—the working class, the peasantry, the petty and middle bourgeoisie, and in some countries, for instance Morocco, some of the landowners. A broad front of national unity spearheaded against imperialism was formed in the Arab countries. One of the leading forces of this front was the national bourgeoisie.

Elimination of the dominance of foreign capital opened up to the national bourgeoisie wide prospects for business activities on the basis of capitalist relations of production, which arose, in the main, during the period of colonial rule.

## THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES

The modern history of the Arab countries is bound up in the closest manner with the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, with the establishment of the world socialist system and the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism.

Lenin wrote that "in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism."<sup>1</sup>

This prediction of Lenin's is now coming true.

The Great October Socialist Revolution sparked off the crisis of imperialism's colonial system. It dealt a deathblow to one of the strongholds of colonialism—Russian tsarism and capitalism. It awakened the peoples of the colonies and drew them into the mainstream of the world revolutionary process.

The world's first victorious socialist revolution demonstrated the direct dependence of the national liberation movements and revolutions on the development and victory of the socialist movement of the proletariat. With the emergence of the Soviet state—that chief offspring of the international labour movement—this dependence assumed the character of a general law endorsed by history. This gave Lenin reason to declare as early as 1919 that "reciprocal relations between peoples and the world political system as a whole are

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 482.



determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world."<sup>1</sup>

The October Revolution not only revolutionised the East—it helped the national liberation movement rise to a new qualitative level. The emergent working class more and more actively swung into the struggle against imperialism, for the freedom and independence of the Arab countries, often acting as a quite independent force of the general national movement. It was during these years that the first political and trade-union organisations of the working class arose, namely, Communist and Workers' Parties and revolutionary trade unions.

Working in the difficult conditions of the underground, the Arab Communists were always in the van of the struggle for national and social liberation. They did a lot to disseminate the ideas of scientific socialism in the Arab countries, and many years ago they gave correct solutions to many economic, political and social problems that confronted the Arab countries. The Arab Communists are waging a courageous struggle, are organising and welding the ranks of the workers and developing their consciousness. These efforts are not wasted: the labour movement, which arose as a component part of the national liberation movement, has from the very beginning acquired a pronounced anti-imperialist character.

At the time of the October Revolution in Russia the Arab countries were an agrarian-raw-material appendage of imperialism in which pre-capitalist relations preponderated.

Politically they were either colonies or protectorates of the West-European colonialists, or Turkish possessions.

Already at that time the general democratic aims of the October Revolution, which had done away with national oppression, granted the peoples of Russia the right to self-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 241.

determination and handed the land over to the peasants, were close to the working masses of the Arab countries whose aspirations they expressed.

The Arab countries, as colonies of the imperialist powers, were involved in the First World War waged between the two imperialist groups for a redivision of the world.

The struggle of the imperialists for supremacy in the Arab countries was one of the causes of the First World War.

After the October Revolution the Soviet Government issued its historic message to all the Moslem working people of Russia and the East in which it announced the annulment of the treaties of the former governments of Russia concerning the partition of Turkey and Persia. This was a complete abandonment of colonial policy, and was confirmed by the withdrawal of Russian troops from these countries. It also waived all privileges with respect to the Arab countries, regarding such privileges as a result of the colonial policy of the imperialist states which were incompatible with the principles of the Soviet state.

These very first acts of the Soviet Government created an entirely new situation in the Middle East. In place of tsarist Russia, which had fought with Britain and France for spheres of influence in the Middle East and for the partition of Turkey, there appeared a new, socialist Russia, which not only renounced all annexations, but actively upheld the rights of the peoples of the Middle East to freedom and independence.

In its Message to the Moslem Working People the Soviet Government wrote: "Moslems of the East, Persians and Turks, Arabs and Hindoos... You must be your own masters in your countries. You must build your own life after your own fashion. You have the right to do this, for you hold your destinies in your own hands."<sup>1</sup>

This Message in an Arabic translation passed from hand to hand in the Arab countries as Lenin's letter to the leaders of the Arab national movement.

The Soviet Government published a number of secret treaties and other documents of the tsarist and Provisional

<sup>1</sup> *SSSR i arabskiye strany 1917-1960* (The USSR and the Arab Countries 1917-1960), Moscow, 1961.



governments showing that the First World War was waged by the imperialist groups for a redivision of the world market, for spheres of influence and colonies against the peoples' vital interests. Among these documents, published in November 1917, was the secret Anglo-French Sykes-Picot Agreement concerning the post-war carve-up of Arab lands.

"We remember only too well," said Salah el-Dine Tarazi, the distinguished Syrian diplomat, "that the Soviet Union is the friend of the Arabs from the very first day of your state's existence. We remember only too well that thanks to Lenin's decree many secret documents from the archives of the government of tsarist Russia were published. From these documents the Arabs learned that as far back as 1916 a secret agreement had been reached between the English and the French for sharing spheres of influence in the Arab world. . . . Thanks to Soviet Russia, thanks to Lenin the Arabs learned the truth about the actions of the imperialists in those years."<sup>1</sup>

The imperialist powers, who, in the course of the war, established occupation regimes in Syria, the Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq, started to carve these countries up after the war.

However, as a result of the victory of the October Revolution, which proclaimed the right of nations to self-determination, the imperialists were no longer able to openly carry out their annexationist designs; they were obliged to manoeuvre, to invent new, more disguised, more subtle methods of colonial seizures. Thus, there came into being the Mandate System.

Unable, under the new historical conditions, to openly resort to the annexation of Arab territories, the imperialists formally placed them under the control of the League of Nations, which issued mandates to the victor powers for the government of these countries. Britain received mandates on Iraq, Palestine and Transjordan, France on Syria and the Lebanon. The USA in turn secured "open doors" for its capital in these new Arab colonies of Britain and France.

The Soviet Government refused to recognise the Mandate System and exposed its annexationist, colonialist essence.

<sup>1</sup> *Noveishaya istoriya arabskikh stran* (Modern History of the Arab Countries), Moscow, 1968, p. 15.

While the imperialists were still wrangling over the distribution of mandates Lenin warned the peoples of the East in November 1919: "When they talk of handing out mandates for colonies, we know very well that it means handing out mandates for spoliation and plunder—handing out to an insignificant section of the world's population the right to exploit the majority of the population of the globe."<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Government never ceased its opposition to the Mandate System, which infringed the rights of the Arab nations.

During the Second World War the German nazis and the Italian fascists hoped to seize the Arab lands, which were an important economic, political and strategic area, and to use this area as a base. In the event of the fascist states winning the war the Arab peoples were in danger of becoming slaves to a still more predatory group of international imperialism.

During the period of the Second World War the ties of friendship between the Soviet Union and the Arab world grew still stronger. The Arab peoples followed with admiration the Soviet Union's heroic struggle against fascism. The successes in this struggle achieved by the forces of democracy, headed by the USSR, were rightly regarded by the Arabs as a reliable guarantee of success in their own fight for freedom and independence.

The Arabs' trust in and sympathy towards the Soviet Union and the socialist state's readiness to give full support to the Arab countries, who were fighting for their independence and the right to direct their own development, led to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt in 1943, followed by Syria, the Lebanon and Iraq in 1944.

The defeat of Italian and German fascism and Japanese militarism, in which the USSR played a decisive role, saw the beginning of a new, second phase in the general crisis of capitalism—the emergence of socialism from the framework of a single country and the formation of a world socialist system, which began to exercise a growing influence on the course of world history. A salient feature of this second phase was the new powerful upsurge of the national liberation struggle in the colonies and semi-colonies.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 159-60.



The war to some extent hastened the growth of the national bourgeoisie and the working class in the Arab countries. Even in Saudi Arabia, where feudalism prevailed and where capitalism was in embryo, there appeared a working class, which gradually gained strength. The growth of the working class and the bourgeoisie and the impact of world events gave impetus to the anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist struggle.

The Arab peoples ascribed their successes in the struggle for national and social liberation largely to the help and support of the Soviet Union. The Soviet state fully justified the hopes of the Arabs. The victory of the Soviet Union and its allies led ultimately to the ejection of the German and Italian troops from the territory of some of the Arab countries and the deliverance of the Arab peoples from the threat of fascist enslavement. In 1945 and 1946 the Soviet Union supported the just demands of Syria and the Lebanon for the withdrawal from their territory of the Anglo-French troops.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations the Soviet Union used the veto to prevent the Security Council from sanctioning a resolution that ran counter to the national interests of both Syria and the Lebanon.

Referring to the discussion of the Syrian-Lebanese question in the Security Council, Georges Akel, a member of the Lebanese parliament, said in his speech: "It is perfectly clear to us that during the examination of our question in the Security Council the states divided into two camps—one of them was on our side, whereas the other took up an opposite stand. The first was headed by the Soviet Union, who firmly, courageously and frankly defended the national question. We ourselves could not have defended our interests better than the Soviet Union had done."

The support of the Soviet Union helped the governments of Syria and the Lebanon to take a firmer stand towards Britain and France.

As a result of the stubborn struggle of the Syrian and Lebanese peoples and yielding to the pressure of world public opinion, the last contingents of British and French troops were withdrawn from Syria on April 17 and from the Lebanon on December 31, 1946. The establishment of the first independent Arab republics and liquidation of their military oc-

cupation regimes dealt a severe blow to the colonial system of imperialism in that part of the world and gave impetus to the national liberation struggle in all the Arab countries. Transjordan received political independence the same year (1946), and Libya in 1951. As a result of the July 1952 revolution Egypt was proclaimed a republic.

The Soviet Union repeatedly came out in strong support of the Arab nations' just demands. In 1947 it supported Egypt's demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Egyptian territory and from the territory of the adjacent Sudan. The Soviet Union always sided with the Arabs during the discussions in the United Nations on questions relating to the situation in Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Expressing the sentiments of his countrymen, Ali Buzo, former leader of the People's Party of Syria, said: "During the discussion of various Arab problems in the United Nations the Soviet Union has always been on the side of the oppressed peoples of the Arab countries, part of whose territories was directly and part indirectly occupied by foreign troops."

During the discussion in the United Nations of Israeli-Arab frontier conflicts the Soviet Union invariably denounced Israel's aggressive acts against her Arab neighbours.

The Second World War saw a widening of the sphere of US activity throughout the world and its faster penetration into important strategic and economic areas, notably that of the Middle East. The Arab countries faced the danger of neo-colonialism. On March 22, 1945, the Arab states signed a pact officially constituting the Arab League. Its member countries declared its aim to be co-ordination of policies for the purpose of co-operation, the preservation of independence and sovereignty, and co-operation in economic and financial matters, by which was to be understood commerce, duties, currency, agriculture and industry.

The formation of the League was an achievement of the Arab world. The fact, however, that most of the Arab states who formed the League at the time enjoyed only a formal independence affected the subsequent activities of that organisation. The League soon became the scene of struggle between the supporters of British imperialism and the pro-American groups. Its leaders during this period adhered to a policy of compromise with imperialism. It was, therefore,



unable effectively to challenge imperialism, which was the main obstacle in the way of economic and political liberation of the Arab countries. During this period the Communists and other Arab patriots strongly urged that the League be switched over to the rails of resolute struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

During the years immediately following the war the Palestine problem came into sharp focus. In the autumn of 1947 the United Nations passed a resolution dividing Palestine into two states—Arab and Jewish. It must be said that the UN decision was a logical move in response to the obstruction offered by reactionary circles, including those of the Arabs, to the attempts to create a single multi-national democratic state on the territory of Palestine.

The Palestinian war of 1948 was the result of a plot between the imperialists and the Zionist leadership, as well as the reactionary Arab rulers. The outcome of it was the establishment of the State of Israel on a territory far greater than that provided for in the UN resolution. About a million Arabs were turned off their land. The Arab reactionaries hastened to use the UN decision and the Palestinian problem to strike a blow at the progressive forces.

With the rise of the State of Israel a new situation was created in the Arab world. The new state started to collaborate closely with the imperialists in fighting the national liberation movement among the Arabs.

With the situation in the Middle East growing more complicated in view of the imperialists' dangerous attempts there to knock together aggressive military blocs to check the national liberation movement, the Soviet Union stepped up its efforts still more in support of the Arab countries. The Soviet Government denounced the declaration of May 25, 1950 by the governments of the USA, Britain and France for joint action against the liberation movement of the Arab peoples. The Soviet Union, in its notes of November 21 and 24, 1951 and January 28, 1952, denounced the aggressive nature of the Middle East Command. The Soviet Union showed that the USA, Britain, France and Turkey were trying to involve the Arab countries in the dangerous military measures of the Atlantic bloc and bend them to new forms of domination. In particular, foreign troops were to be

brought into the countries of the Middle East and foreign bases set up there.

The Soviet Government's vigorous protest against the Middle East Command rendered an inestimable service to the Arab states, who refused to be a party to this aggressive bloc directed not only against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, but against the vital interests of the Arabs themselves.

A similar situation arose in the Middle East during 1954-55, when the colonial powers came forward with new military plans for the organisation here of the notorious Baghdad Pact. And again the Soviet Government gave moral and political support to the Arab countries in their opposition to this military alliance. The Soviet Government exposed the imperialist nature of the Baghdad Pact, which had nothing in common with the interests of the Middle East countries. In its declaration of February 9, 1955, the Soviet Government reaffirmed its support for the five principles of peaceful coexistence and co-operation among the nations adopted as a programme of action at the Bandung Conference of Asian and African countries.

The Soviet Union showed a sympathetic understanding of Egypt's defence interests when it filled the latter's order for weapons in 1955 on the usual commercial terms.

Complete mutual understanding between the USSR and the Arab states during this period found expression in a further expansion of Soviet-Arab contacts. In 1955 and 1956 diplomatic relations were established with Libya; a new treaty of friendship was concluded with the Yemen; a trade and payment agreement was signed with the Syrian Republic; the Soviet Government recognised the independence of the Sudan and established diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Sudan. The Soviet Government welcomed the proclamation of independence of Morocco and Tunisia, and gave its support to the national revolution in Algeria.

The Soviet Union rendered inestimable support to the Arab nations in 1956 at a moment when a deadly threat hung over the Arab world and Arab independence was at stake.

The Soviet Government, at the Security Council meetings, at the emergency session of the UN General Assembly and in



its diplomatic notes branded the Anglo-Franco-Israeli aggressors not only as truculent colonialists who encroached on the liberty of the Arabs, but as instigators of a world war.

The Soviet Government, in the most forceful manner, gave warning that it was "determined to use force in order to rout the aggressors and restore peace in the East".

The firm support which the Soviet Union and all peace-loving countries throughout the world gave to the courageous struggle of the Egyptian people forced the aggressors to halt the military operations which they had begun in the zone of the Suez Canal and to withdraw. The 1956 adventure in Egypt ended with the military, moral and political defeat of the colonialists. Peace was restored in the Nile valley. The Soviet Union also gave support to Egypt in the matter of eliminating the consequences of the aggression. The Soviet Union's noble and sustained efforts won the profound gratitude of the Arab countries.

During the days of this tripartite aggression Arab solidarity in the struggle against imperialism grew still stronger. The workers of Syria blew up pipelines, the Sudanese workers boycotted British and French planes, the Saudi workers stopped the piping of oil, the Kuwaiti workers damaged the pipeline, and so on.

Despite the savage terror, mass demonstrations of solidarity with fighting Egypt were held in Iraq. The demonstrators demanded Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact and the resignation of the government of Nuri as-Said. The working class became a factor of growing importance in the national liberation movement.

Already in March 1956, representatives of the trade unions of Egypt, Syria, the Lebanon and the Sudan in the presence of trade-union representatives from Libya and Iraq and with the support of the workers of Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia founded the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions. This organisation set itself the aim of fighting imperialism, strengthening anti-imperialist Arab unity, raising the standard of living of the workers, achieving social justice and industrialisation of the Arab lands.

The imperialist powers, however, had no intention of relinquishing their positions. Again and again the dark

clouds gathered over the Arab countries. The imperialists weaved a web of intrigues in Jordan, Oman, the Yemen, and in the autumn of 1957 in Syria, which took the form of open armed intervention in the Lebanon and Jordan in the summer of 1958. At this crucial hour of Arab struggle the Soviet state was as firm as ever in defence of their interests.

The Soviet Union stoutly defended the independence and sovereignty of the Syrian Republic. It drew the attention of world opinion to the events in that country and warned against the danger of the adventurist policy pursued by the Western powers.

The Soviet Government demanded at the Twelfth Session of the UN General Assembly on October 16, 1957 that vigorous measures be taken in the event of violation of the Syrian frontier and an invasion of Syria by Turkish troops. The Soviet Government, at the plenary meeting of the Assembly on October 22, 1957, reaffirmed its readiness, in accordance with the principles and aims of the United Nations, to take the necessary steps to curb the aggressor. This had a sobering effect.

From the very first days of the July 1958 revolution the Soviet Union sided with the Iraq Republic. It greeted the birth of the Kuwait state on June 19, 1961, the proclamation of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Yemen Republic in 1962, the People's Republic of South Yemen in November 1967, the Democratic Republic of the Sudan in May, and of the Libyan Arab Republic in September 1969, and supported the formation of other independent states, and so on.

It should be noted that most of the Arab states were economically undeveloped, agrarian cattle-breeding countries with strong survivals of pre-capitalist relations in agriculture, in which about 80 per cent of the population were engaged. In post-war years, especially after the achievement of independence, progress began to be made in the national industry, and the working class grew numerically. Before the Second World War there were no more than 1,400,000 workers here, most of whom were employed in small, primitively equipped domestic-craft enterprises. At present the working class has reached the figure of 6,500,000, of which over 1,500,000 are



factory workers. The countries with the largest number of workers (including the agricultural proletariat) are Egypt (3,600,000), Algeria (523,000), Iraq (about 450,000), the Sudan (400,000), Morocco (400,000), Syria (270,000), Tunisia (250,000) and the Lebanon (250,000).

The numerical growth of the working class and its heightened level of class and political consciousness has imparted a militant character to the struggle of the Arab peoples for national liberation.

The present-day anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab peoples, their striving to overcome their countries' backwardness along paths of development leading to socialism, are a requirement of the epoch.

The course of historical events has shown that the Arab nations possess a great potential for accelerated social development. The imperialists fear this more than anything. Loss of colonial privileges, in their view, should be compensated by a guarantee of capitalist development in the young independent states. In the absence of such a guarantee the colonialists try first of all to strike a blow at the social gains and the progressive regimes. Experience has shown that where they succeed in this they have a chance of recovering old privileges in new disguise. That is why the socialist countries display concern for the strengthening of the progressive regimes, for rendering them disinterested aid and support. Support for the progressive independent regimes is one of the best forms of aid to the national liberation movement. The June 1967 events in the Middle East have shown again to the world who the true friends of the Arabs are. One of the principal strategic aims of the imperialists in using Israel as a battering-ram against Egypt, Syria and Jordan was the liquidation at all costs of the progressive regimes in the Arab world. Fortunately for the Arab peoples this base design was discovered in good time. The USSR and other countries of socialism were valuably instrumental in exposing the predatory schemes of the USA and its partners and organising a rebuff to the aggressors. The Arab peoples gratefully appreciate the Soviet Union's unrelenting efforts in defence of their interests. It was on the initiative of the Central Committee of the CPSU and its Politbureau that, at the height of the dangerous events in the Middle East, a

meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the European socialist countries was called and measures were co-ordinated to check Israeli aggression, eliminate its consequences and render urgent assistance to the Arab peoples who had been attacked. On the proposal of the CPSU's Central Committee the Soviet Government took the lead in calling for an emergency session of the UN General Assembly to take urgent measures. Although the UN was not able entirely to fulfil its mission, the calling of the General Assembly played a positive role in exposing imperialist plans in the Middle East.

For decades the enemies of the Arabs had been sowing enmity towards the Communists in their countries, spreading slander and lies. Life, however, is the best teacher, and facts are stronger than lies. "Anti-Communists are those who are against the Arabs". This aphorism, which originated among the Algerian guerilla fighters in the crucible of bitter battles for national liberation, is now becoming popular in the mouths of the Egyptian, Syrian, Iraqi and other Arabs.

"Imperialism tried to make out that Communists were a sort of bogey, the mere approach to whom was dangerous. But we are making this approach to the Communists by doing away with exploitation and levelling incomes," declared Afif al-Raui, Deputy Minister of Agrarian Reform of the Republic of Iraq at the Third Congress of Collective Farmers of the USSR in November 1969.

Unless there is an understanding of the fact that the chief contradiction existing in the world of today is that between the socialist and the capitalist system and that in the course of its development the interests of the national liberation movement are inseparable from those of the world socialist system, it is impossible to frame a correct and long-range policy for any of the Arab countries.

"Long years of experience have shown," said Khalid Bagdash, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Syria, "that the slightest vacillation, the slightest inconsistency in the matter of co-operation between the Arab national liberation movement and its natural ally—the Soviet Union—in the struggle against imperialism multiplies the difficulties which this movement comes up against. Thus, in



1948, during the discussion of the Palestinian question in the UN the reactionary Arab leaders tried their hardest to get this question settled by an agreement with the imperialist states from which the Soviet Union was excluded. Even some patriotically-minded Arab leaders, in face of the blackmailing tactics of the imperialists and reactionaries, did not dare at the time to make any contacts with the Soviet state and its representatives in the United Nations for an exchange of views on resolving this complex problem in a way most favourable to the Arabs. As a result, the American and British imperialists, in concert with world Zionism and the reactionary Arab leaders, succeeded in playing their double game.

"Some progressive nationalists in the Arab countries blame us, Syrian Communists, for being 'too friendly' with the land of the Great October Revolution, for the fact that we constantly support the policy pursued by the CPSU on major international issues and on the problems of the national liberation movement in particular. We take this stand because our first concern is for the interests of our native land, our people. We do this because we are patriots. He who does not love his country cannot be a Communist. The greatest love a man can show for his country is by fighting for its liberation from colonialism and exploitation and leading it to socialism. And none of this can be done without friendship and a strong united front with the world's chief socialist power—the Soviet Union. That is the basic principle of a correct policy in the international situation that prevailed after October 1917. It is a principle that cannot be sacrificed to any transient tactical considerations. That is why an attempt by any revolutionary, leave alone a Communist, to abandon this principle is a gross mistake, a position that is hopelessly untenable."

The fact can no longer be denied that the USSR is the true friend and ally of the Arab peoples. It is noteworthy that in recent years contacts are being strengthened not only in the field of state relations, but between the CPSU and the revolutionary democratic parties in the Arab countries. Business and friendly ties have been established between the trade unions of the USSR and the Arab countries and the youth, women's and other public organisations. Ties

are strengthening between the Arab revolutionary democratic parties and the Marxist-Leninist parties of the socialist states and a number of other countries.

The Arab anti-imperialist forces have the support of the vast majority of mankind, including the family of socialist states, which is its tried and trusted vanguard. The very fact that 48 representatives of 21 national democratic parties of Asia and Africa attended the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU goes to prove this. In their greetings to the Congress they revealed the tremendous role which the Soviet Union plays in the fight against colonialism and spoke about the important contribution of the CPSU, the Soviet people and the socialist community of nations to the cause and victories of the national liberation movement.

"The Soviet Union," stated the General Secretary of the Arab Socialist Union at the Congress in April 1971, "...is an important and strong support for the liberation and progressive movements of the peoples. But for its constant, reliable and effective assistance to these peoples the world today would be a witness to the most abominable and unspeakably brutal violence on the part of the colonialists and imperialists."

The speeches of many of the Afro-Asian guests at the Twenty-Fourth Congress showed a clear understanding of what the successes achieved by the USSR in the economic, technological and cultural fields and in the strengthening of its defence capabilities meant for the national liberation movement. These successes are justifiably regarded by them as the Soviet people's notable contribution to the common cause of anti-imperialist struggle.

Aziz Mohammed, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party, declared at the Twenty-Fourth Congress that "Iraqi Communists regard the achievements and victories, which the Soviet people have won and are continuing to win under the leadership of their glorious Party, as the victories and achievements of all progressive mankind, and consequently, as our own victories, as the achievements of our own people, of our national and revolutionary movement."

Mohammed Harmel, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Tunisian Communist Party, pointed out that "anti-



Sovietism, in whatever form it may appear, is the enemy of the national liberation movement."

The recognition by the representatives of the national democratic countries of Asia and Africa that there is a unity of interests between world socialism and the national liberation movement and that the alliance between them needs to be strengthened is a great victory for the general line of the CPSU on the national-colonial question, which is based on Lenin's teaching to the effect that the victorious socialist revolution and the anti-imperialist national liberation movement are strong allies in the fight against imperialism.

## THE WINNING OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE BY THE ARAB COUNTRIES AND THE CHOICE OF A SOCIALIST ROAD OF DEVELOPMENT

The national liberation movement which had spread in a number of Arab countries after the Second World War rose to a new and higher level in scope and organisation and took on a stronger anti-imperialist character.

A further weakening of the colonial system was taking place in the Arab countries as a result of the growth of internal contradictions. Thus, during the Second World War the inflow of foreign goods in the Arab countries contracted and their competition was not so crippling; the national bourgeoisie grew stronger and took up a firmer position in regard to foreign capital. The local working class, too, grew stronger and more organised, and the peasant masses became more active in their struggle for a solution of the agrarian and peasant question. Communist Parties arose and the existing ones grew stronger. A more radical stand was taken also by the strengthened nationalist parties made up of members of various classes, the leadership of which was effected by the middle classes and petty bourgeoisie. The trade-union movement, too, gained momentum. Among the basic slogans of the liberation movement were: withdrawal of foreign troops, overthrow of pro-imperialist regimes, recovery of national independence, liquidation of feudal landownership, development of the national economy, the granting of political and democratic rights to the working people and improvement of their socio-economic condition.

The motive force of the national liberation movement were the workers, peasants, artisans, white-collar workers, students, intellectuals, officers and army rank and file, the



middle classes and some of the patriotic-minded big bourgeoisie and liberal-minded landowners.

The Arab national liberation movement achieved its greatest successes in close co-operation with and with the help of the socialist countries, first and foremost the USSR. Anti-imperialist, revolutionary democratic circles in the Arab countries found from their own experience after the Second World War that support for their national policy could be sought only from the socialist states.

The July 1952 Revolution in Egypt was made by the army headed by the secret Society of Free Officers, it owed its success to the backing of the broad masses and it was this that in the final analysis gave the revolution its anti-imperialist and anti-feudal character. "The greatest thing about the Revolution of July 23rd, 1952," says the Charter, "is that the armed forces who set to stage it were not the makers of the Revolution, but its popular tool."<sup>1</sup>

The July 1952 Revolution had a great impact upon the whole Arab world. In February 1954, thanks to the unity between the army and the people in Syria the dictatorial regime was overthrown and a regime of bourgeois-democratic liberties set up. On the night of November 1, 1954, the Algerian people started an armed uprising against French imperialism. September 1955 was an important landmark on the way towards effective co-operation between the Arab countries and the world of socialism. In those days the leaders of the young Egyptian Republic signed an agreement for deliveries of arms and military equipment from the socialist countries. This put an end to the arms-supply monopoly of the imperialist West, a monopoly which had given the imperialists power to rule the destinies of the Arab world. On January 1, 1956, the Sudan's independence was proclaimed, followed on March 2 by Morocco's and on March 20 of the same year by Tunisia's.

The national liberation movement of the Arabs reached its peak at that period with the nationalisation by Egypt of the Suez Canal Company and the heroic resistance of Port Said and the whole nation to Anglo-Franco-Israeli aggression in the autumn of 1956. This was a turning point

<sup>1</sup> *The Charter*, Cairo, 1962, p. 53.

in the destinies of the whole African continent as well as of the Arab countries. The courageous struggle of the Egyptians, solidarity among the Arab countries and the strong support to the Arabs given by the Soviet Union and other peace-loving forces throughout the world compelled the aggressors to call a halt to their military action and withdraw.

The defeat of the aggressors blasted the legend about the superiority of the armed forces of imperialism over the forces of the national liberation movement and showed that the latter was a major factor of the world revolutionary process and that with the active support of the world socialist system and of the working class of the developed capitalist countries it was capable of winning great victories in the struggle of the less developed countries for political and economic independence.

The defeat of the aggressors strengthened the morale of those who were fighting for the national liberation of Algeria, southern Arabia and those Asian and African countries which were still under the heel of colonialism.

Egypt's victory over the Anglo-Franco-Israeli aggressors ushered in a new, third stage in the historical development of the Arab nations after the Second World War.

In the 1960s Egypt, Algeria and Syria were faced with the problem as to the ways of their further development, since these countries' evolution along the capitalist path had not resolved any of the acute social and economic problems confronting them.

Having set upon a course of independent national policy, the emergent Arab states were bound to come up against opposition from the imperialist powers, who used every means and method, including armed aggression, to check the expansion and development of the national liberation revolution and the efforts of the Arabs to achieve national unity. Imperialism found accomplices in the person of the feudalists and the local, chiefly big bourgeoisie, who, for the sake of their narrow class interests, not only sabotaged the efforts of the Arab revolutionary governments to deal with their countries' urgent needs, but acted in collusion with imperialism by following a policy aimed at preserving intact the economic and political positions of foreign monopolies in



the Arab countries. All intrigues notwithstanding, Egypt and Syria succeeded in foiling the internal and external reactionaries. During his visit to the USSR in 1958 President Nasser said in one of his talks with Soviet people: "I should like to remind you, friends, that your support for our cause played an important role in that you supplied Egypt and Syria with arms, thus defeating the principle of monopolist possession of arms and helping to defeat the imperialist policy of supremacy over the Arab nations. And then your policy of support to the Arab states, who are defending the freedom and independence which they have won, has kindled hope in the hearts of those nations which are still fighting for their liberation."

During 1957-1959 the Soviet Union signed agreements with Syria, Egypt and Iraq, and in 1963 with Algeria, for economic and technical co-operation. Thus were laid the foundations of these Arab countries' independent national economies.

The anti-imperialist foreign policy of the independent Arab countries and their efforts in the field of independent economic development came up from the very start against the opposition of the imperialist countries, above all the USA. They did not want to lose their privileged positions in the Arab countries, especially the possibility of robbing their immense oil resources. The Eisenhower Doctrine proclaimed in January 1957 aimed at setting up a barrier to the growing anti-imperialist movement among the Arabs and enabling the USA to interfere in the internal affairs of the independent and sovereign Arab states on the pretext of combating the "communist menace".

The Arab nations summarily rejected this doctrine. But the seeds which it had sown continued for quite a time to poison the atmosphere. Outbursts of anti-communism in the Arab countries at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s caused no little harm to co-operation and mutual understanding among the anti-imperialist democratic forces of the Arab countries in face of imperialism and internal reaction. However, as progress was made in dealing with major national problems, in overcoming the resistance of external and internal reaction, in strengthening and extending ties with the socialist system, in other words, as the na-

tional liberation revolution evolved into a social revolution, voices were raised ever more strongly in Arab countries for unity of all national democratic anti-imperialist forces, for the choice of a non-capitalist path of development.

As has already been noted, the majority of the population in the Arab countries consists of peasants, the mass of whom are illiterate and strongly under the influence of clan and tribal pre-capitalist survivals. Naturally, socialist ideas were most widespread among the working class and the middle strata of the urban population. The more or less consistent adoption of advanced working-class views by whole sections of the non-proletarian population follows from the nature of the present epoch, an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale. Whereas in the past, in the epoch of capitalism's complete dominion, the middle classes as a rule supported the policies of the bourgeoisie with only progressive individuals fighting for the ideals of the working class; now, seeing the viability and advantages of the socialist system, these sections in the liberated Arab countries are coming out more and more strongly for a path leading to the construction of socialism.

The most politically active representatives of the middle strata in the Arab countries are the intellectuals, who, by their social nature, are heterogeneous. The quaint reflection which socialist ideas received in the distorting mirror of some people's minds, notably those belonging to the feudal-land-owning, bourgeois and clerical strata, led to a perversion of the ideas of scientific socialism and bred a theory of so-called Arab (Islamic, Co-operative, Baathist, Neo-Dustur, etc.) socialism.

The growing role of the army was a characteristic feature of the Arab national liberation movement after the Second World War. The army took the lead in the revolution in a number of Arab countries and became the striking force of that revolution. Today it determines the home and foreign policies in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, the Sudan and a number of other Arab states.

After making the revolution the army in a number of Arab countries not only took over control of political life but assumed unfamiliar administrative and economic functions. This dangerous tendency led to the officers' corps



considering itself a supra-class political force behind which the whole population of the country was obliged to rally, irrespective of their class, religious, national and political interests. This in turn bred an attitude of disbelief in the revolutionary capabilities and strength of the people, depreciated the role of the national front, of political parties and democratic organisations, led to the rejection of parliamentary forms of government and, in the final analysis, to the establishment of military dictatorships in one or another country.

Although patriotic elements of the army came to power, military dictatorship could not be regarded as a stable form of transition to democracy and a non-capitalist path of development. Experience in many countries, notably that of Iraq in 1963, has shown that military dictatorship based on petty-bourgeois ideology more often than not is the first step towards the suppression of democracy. At the same time, under definite specific conditions, military dictatorship can play a positive role, as was the case in Egypt, where many democrats among the military, in the course of development of the July Revolution gradually shed their petty-bourgeois illusions, arrived at a correct understanding of the role of the working masses and began to implement radical socio-economic and political reforms in the interest of these masses.

A study of Egypt's experience is not only valuable for an understanding of the processes taking place in that country, but is a considerable help towards an understanding of the revolutionary process throughout the Arab world, since the Egyptian revolution is the vanguard unit of the whole Arab national liberation revolution.

The Egyptian revolution of 1952 passed through a number of stages in its development, and these stages, despite specific objective and subjective factors, reflect the general pattern of development of the national liberation revolutions in the present age. The July 1952 Revolution during its march has known quest, errors and failures. This applies in full measure also to the ideological views of the revolutionary democrats of Egypt. At first radically minded Egyptian intellectuals of a national revolutionary trend were inclined to underestimate the complexity of the process of creating

the preconditions for the construction of socialism in the country. Sometimes some of them believed in the possibility of starting immediately on socialist reforms and following the strategy and tactics characteristic of a socialist revolution. Gradually the views of many national revolutionary democrats broadened, became more realistic.

The experience of political leadership of social reforms is helping the Arab revolutionary forces heading the movement towards a non-capitalist path to gradually clarify a number of questions concerning the class nature of the contemporary phase of the national liberation movement, the composition and character of the class forces capable of conducting the struggle for socialism, the forms of transition to it, and so on. The formation of a new, socialist world view in Egypt is no smooth process even today. The birthmarks of the past are still in evidence, especially the influence of bourgeois ideology. But the new, arising from the objective needs of the country's development, is steadily paving a way for itself and the future belongs to it. The important thing is that the Egyptian and other representatives of the many-millioned Arab peoples should lose no time in finding a practical road to scientific socialism, which is the only true and reliable compass pointing the way to the building of the new society.

### CAPITALISM OR SOCIALISM?

#### EGYPT'S ORIENTATION ON SOCIALISM

Egypt received formal independence in 1922, but even after the Second World War it virtually depended on Britain. This dependence was due not only to the shackling treaty obligations which Britain imposed on Egypt, but to the presence of an 80-thousand-strong British occupation army in the Suez Canal zone. Power in the land belonged to the royal court and a small clique of landowners and capitalists, who, at the whim of the English, relieved one another in various cabinets, creating a semblance of change.

During 1945-1946, in the process of anti-imperialist struggle, militant democratic organisations began to be set up uniting in their ranks representatives of the working class,



progressive students and intellectuals, peasants and middle strata of the towns. The most active of them were the Workers' Committee of National Liberation and the National Committee of Workers and Students, who took the lead of the anti-imperialist movement among the Egyptian people. At the beginning of 1946 mass demonstrations swept through the country demanding the withdrawal of British troops and annulment of the enslaving Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936.

The anti-imperialist movement gained momentum in the years that followed.

In October 1951, under pressure of the popular masses, the Egyptian Government announced the abrogation of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty, to which the British imperialists retorted with open aggression, by sending more troops to Egypt and resorting to arms. A guerrilla movement arose in the Suez Canal zone. A most active part in it was played by progressive-minded workers, students and some servicemen. The guerrillas blew up supply depots and communications of the occupational forces, killed officers, and carried on broad propaganda among the rank and file, especially among the British colonial troops. Over 75,000 Egyptian workers in the Suez Canal zone refused to work for the British occupationists.

On July 23, 1952 an army unit led by the secret Society of Free Officers carried out a coup d'état, dethroned and expelled King Farouk from the country, and a year later (on July 18, 1953) proclaimed Egypt a Republic. All power in the country passed into the hands of the Revolutionary Command Council, consisting of leaders of the Society of Free Officers.

Egypt's young rulers had a general idea of the main problems facing the Egyptian revolution, namely: liberation of the country from the military, political and economic domination of the imperialists; securing national independence; liquidation of feudal survivals, which acted as a drag on the country's development; and the establishment of a democratic regime and social justice for the popular masses.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that the leaders of the revolution saw the ways of achieving these ends as clearly as they saw the problems that faced them.

Gamal Abdel Nasser wrote frankly about these difficulties: "Now what is it we are all out to accomplish? And how to accomplish it? I really knew almost at all times the answer to the first question. . . . As to the answer to the second question, I feel I must admit no other idea had undergone in my mind so many changes."<sup>1</sup>

On making the coup the leaders of the Egyptian revolution were confronted with the problem as to what way the country was to take. The question of pace of economic development, in view of the acute agrarian overpopulation and the paucity of natural resources, was for Egypt a question literally of life or death. Since internal accumulation was clearly insufficient there arose the problem as to where and how to raise funds for boosting the country's economy.

Since the Egyptian revolution at this stage bore a bourgeois-democratic character, and the government of General Naguib represented, in effect, the interests of the Egyptian national bourgeoisie, it naturally rejected the non-capitalist path of development. In starting on the construction of its national economy, Egypt, like the other independent Arab countries, not only experienced pressure on the part of imperialism and internal reaction, but lacked the means for industrial development and was badly in need of national skilled personnel devoted to the popular cause and capable of competently running the national economy. Another thing that made itself felt was the fact that the national leadership which had come to power did not possess a revolutionary scientific ideology that could have enabled it to effectively solve the complex problems of state and economic construction. Without doubt this largely accounts for the contradictory character of Egypt's and other Arab countries' development. The main emphasis during the first stage of the July 1952 Revolution was on encouraging the initiative of the local and partly of the foreign bourgeoisie and on the assumption that by restricting big landownership a certain amount of capital would be diverted from agriculture to industry. Naive hopes were placed on the unselfish assistance of the Western powers, chiefly the USA. Finally, there was the illusion that

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation. The Philosophy of the Revolution*, Cairo, 1958, p. 31.



the Egyptian bourgeoisie, having thrown off the shackles of feudal and foreign domination, would quickly develop industry and maintain the country's economic independence. These illusions, however, were dispelled.

But the tremendous pressure of imperialist and reactionary propaganda, the numerous negative accretions of the past and anti-communist prejudices had to be overcome before the minds of Egypt's and other Arab countries' leaders accepted the principles of such a genuine revolutionary world view as that of scientific socialism. A notable role here was played by the impact of Soviet experience, the example of successful economic and cultural construction which the Soviet Union and other socialist countries had set.

Acutely short as it was of funds to carry out its economic plans, and in face of the unacceptable terms of credit offered to a sovereign state by the foreign imperialists, the Government of Egypt started to co-operate extensively with the socialist countries.

At the same time it started to nationalise foreign property. On July 26, 1956, the Suez Canal Company was nationalised. This act had far-reaching consequences.

Britain, France and Israel staged armed intervention in Egypt with the aim of defeating the national liberation movement throughout the Arab world. The Egyptian people, however, rose as one man to repulse the interventionists. As a result of the Egyptian people's heroic struggle and the firm attitude adopted by the Soviet Government, the intervention in the Suez Canal zone fell through.

Victory over the aggressors at Suez meant that Britain and France had lost not only the Suez Canal but, with Egyptianisation, a considerable part of their economic positions in the Egyptian Republic. This tended towards the rapid consolidation of national capital. At the same time the state sector, too, was gradually strengthened.

On January 1, 1957, the Egyptian Government announced abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1954, thus putting an end to colonialist interference in the country's internal affairs.

The failure of their aggression, however, did not stop the intrigues of the foreign colonialists against Egypt. The imperialist powers started an economic blockade of Egypt. All

economic and technical "aid" by the United States and other imperialist countries ceased.

Under these conditions political independence could be maintained only by further developing the revolution, by strengthening Egypt's economy, by establishing close relations with other Arab countries and with the socialist community of nations.

"The main condition for developing our economy," Ash-Shafei wrote in 1957, "is the preservation of the political independence which we have won. If the colonialists impose their rule upon us again there can be no question of any real economic regeneration of our country."<sup>1</sup>

Owing to ceaseless imperialist threats talks on unification started between Egypt and Syria at the end of 1957. In February 1958, the United Arab Republic was formed and on March 5, 1958, a provisional constitution of the new state was proclaimed.

As subsequent events showed, one of the major aims of this union, undertaken on the initiative of the Syrian Government, was to defeat the democratic movement in Syria. The Egyptian as well as the Syrian bourgeoisie were interested in this. But as soon as the Syrian bourgeoisie felt its interests threatened by Egyptian competitors it started to work against this union. The progressive socio-economic measures of the UAR Government in 1961 acted as a spur to the Syrian reactionaries, who, hastily rallying their forces, carried out a coup and seceded from the union with Egypt in September of the same year. The experience of uniting Syria and Egypt has shown that this unification cannot be achieved on a capitalist and anti-democratic basis.

The revolution of 1952 was followed by a strengthening of the positions of the Egyptian big bourgeoisie, who began to seek ways of seizing the natural resources and markets of the neighbouring Arab countries, by a sharpening of its antagonisms with the imperialist monopolies, who had long since seized these markets and resources. On the other hand, there

<sup>1</sup> Ash-Shafei, *Razvitiye natsionalno-osvoboditelnogo dvizhenia v Yegipte (1882-1956)* (Development of the National Liberation Movement in Egypt. 1882-1956), Moscow, 1961, p. 254. Retranslated from the Russian.



was an awakening of national self-consciousness among the Egyptian and other Arab peoples, which was greatly stimulated by the victory of the Egyptian people over Britain, France and Israel in 1956. All this tended to produce signs of growing Arab nationalism in Egypt and other Arab countries. The Egyptian Constitution of 1956 stated that "Egypt is an independent and sovereign Arab state," that "the Egyptian people are part of the Arab nation."

Trying to make out that its own narrow selfish aims were in the interests of the whole nation the Egyptian bourgeoisie sought to use nationalism as a means of increasing its exploitation of the masses and obscuring class contradictions and the class struggle. When this struggle inevitably erupted it called on the working people to "be patriots", to forget class antagonisms in the interest of "national unity" in the struggle against imperialism. For a time the Egyptian bourgeoisie was able to impose its point of view on the revolutionary leadership, and this was reflected in Egypt's foreign as well as home policies.

Without going into all the aspects of Arab nationalism, which does not differ in essentials from other similar bourgeois ideologies, we shall deal briefly with one feature which is a major issue of principle.

Broadly speaking, Arab nationalism represents a political trend aimed at setting up a united independent Arab state embracing all Arabic-speaking peoples who consider themselves part of the Arab nation.

During the period of struggle for national liberation and unity Arab nationalism not only became the banner of the Arab bourgeoisie, which was objectively interested in achieving the basic aims of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution, but rallied the broad masses of the Arab countries, who read in it its general democratic as well as national message.

After winning political independence most of the Arab countries made a bid for national unity. The attempt was made both on the initiative of the imperialists (the Hashemite union of Iraq and Jordan, the Federation of South Arabia) and by the liberated Arab countries (the union of Syria and Egypt [UAR] and the Federal Union between the UAR and the Kingdom of the Yemen). The former were unions, not

of Arab peoples, but of Arab reactionary rulers for fighting the national liberation struggle in their countries. It is not surprising, therefore, that they suffered a complete fiasco.

In the case of the latter things were more complicated. Rushed through without a careful study of the specific conditions prevailing in each of the uniting countries, and moreover on an anti-democratic basis, these attempts also failed.

Today public opinion in the leading Arab countries believes that stable unity and reunification of the Arab peoples sunken by imperialism can be achieved only by way of a socialist reorganisation of Arab society.

This, in turn, implies the evolution of the general Arab national liberation movement into a social revolution, that is, into a struggle for the liquidation of all reactionary, exploiting classes and strata within the Arab countries themselves.

At the same time it should not be forgotten that nationalism, in whatever guise it may appear, is, like every bourgeois ideology, aimed at disuniting the nations, at their self-glorification and isolation, and, what is most dangerous of all, is spearheaded against proletarian internationalism, which is one of the basic laws of development of socialist society.

Arab Communists, who are most consistent champions of national independence, consider that unification of the Arab countries may be of a progressive nature only if founded on the following principles: complete liberation from colonialism, continuation of the struggle against imperialism for peace and co-operation with all opponents of neocolonialism, implementation of democratic reforms and guaranteed democratic liberties, proper assessment of the specific conditions in each of the countries and their different levels of economic development, and absolute respect for the strivings of all Arab peoples to freely decide their own destinies.

Having strengthened its economic and political positions during the early years of the Egyptian revolution, the big bourgeoisie of Egypt began to interfere more actively in her home and foreign policies. "The capitalists strove to increase their profits," Nasser said later. "In 1960 members of exploiter capital began to penetrate into government bodies. They tried to recruit to their side representatives of the revolution. . . . They infiltrated the National Union and established their control over it. . . . Therefore the question confronted



us: who is going to rule the country? It turned out that the country's wealth was owned by less than 5 per cent of the population. The reactionaries wanted to use the revolution in their own ends."

This statement by the President of the UAR is interesting in many respects. It shows—and the facts confirm it—that at that period there were no few people in the UAR leadership who believed they could bypass the class struggle, arrange co-operation of the classes and secure the interests of both the bourgeoisie and the working people. As a matter of fact it was the bourgeoisie who, from the start, gained most from the reforms carried out in the UAR.

The positions of national capital were particularly strengthened after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company and the government's sequestration and Egyptisation measures in connection with shares belonging to British and French nationals.

As a result of these measures some 1,500 British, French and Australian companies and firms, and 9 big insurance companies and foreign banks were Egyptised. Representatives of the Egyptian national bourgeoisie and civil servants took the place of foreigners in all the Egyptised enterprises.

Together with the growth of small and medium enterprises within the country there was taking place a concentration of production and formation of big monopolist associations. The biggest were the Misr Bank group and the Ahmed Aboud group. During 1950-1960 the Bank's reserve fund increased from £E4,225,000 to £E7,614,000, and annual net profit from £E788,000 to £E1,135,000.

During 1960 alone the number of employers in the UAR receiving profits of over £E10,000 approximately doubled.

It should be noted that despite Egyptisation foreign capital continued to hold its positions in Egypt; it merely modified its methods of exploitation.

Enlisting the aid of local confederates among the Egyptian bourgeoisie and using them as a screen, the Western monopolies increased the number of their agencies in the UAR, which created a grave danger to the country's newly won national independence. The economic basis which had been built up in Egypt by that time had its relevant political superstructure. The National Council (parliament) elected

in 1957 had among its members 16 former ministers, 35 high-ranking officials, 47 army and police officers, 97 intellectuals and professional men, 25 employers and big tradesmen, 7 company employees, 15 landowners, 46 rich peasants, 45 village headmen, one clergyman and 4 workers. The Left forces could rely only on these workers and two other progressive MPs, who, incidentally, were shortly removed from parliament.

Nevertheless, the Egyptian national bourgeoisie was dissatisfied, for one thing because, in the process of Egyptisation, part of the foreign property passed over to the state sector, the EOE (Economic Organisation of Egypt), which bought up all the shares of 18 and part of the shares of 21 foreign companies. Secondly, the state programme of industrialisation, despite the participation in it of private capital, testified to a policy of steady consolidation of the state sector. Thirdly, the state issued a number of laws restricting private enterprise. Fourthly, the national bourgeoisie grew more and more apprehensive of the government's foreign policy aimed at closer relations with the socialist countries. Fifthly, the agrarian reform deprived the feudalists of political power but did not eliminate their economic influence. In agriculture capitalist employers gained ground and attempted to exercise influence on political power within the country in order to check further restriction of private property in land.

Members of the national bourgeoisie used their economic power to openly sabotage the government's policy aimed at achieving the country's economic independence and improving the condition of the working people.

What is more, capitalism declared war on the economic plans, on what it called "sacrificing the present generation to the coming generation". There still existed within the country an acute shortage of internal resources for financing development projects. The beginning of construction work on the Aswan High Dam demanded a concrete decision on the question of sources of financing.

In this connection there arose the question of the Egyptian bourgeoisie's role and place in the development of the national economy. It became increasingly clear to patriotic officers that economic growth alone without a struggle



against big capital could not improve the well-being of the people, that there could be no improvement of the people's grievous plight unless the basic means of production necessary for changing the whole economic structure were concentrated in the hands of the state. Big capital had no desire, nor was it capable of securing economic independence for the country. By leaguering itself with imperialism it betrayed the national interests of the UAR. The question: what was to be Egypt's further path of revival and development, seeing that development along the capitalist path had resolved none of the urgent problems?—came more and more into critical focus.

With the increasing resistance on the part of internal reaction, the establishment of business contacts with the socialist countries and receipt of effective aid from them, with the solution of a number of national issues (the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, warding off aggression, nationalisation of foreign companies, the agrarian reform, etc.) and with the consolidation of the situation both within the country and in the international arena, Egypt's progressive forces came out more and more strongly for the socialist path of development.

The idea of building a socialist society in Egypt was first expressed by Nasser in the spring of 1955. On March 10, 1957, he reverted to it in a talk with an Indian correspondent, explaining that by socialism he understood co-operation between the workers and employers, between the private and state sectors of the economy, and the planning of economic development.

In December 1957, at the Third Congress of Egyptian Co-operators, the President officially announced construction in Egypt of "a socialist democratic co-operative system", free from political and economic exploitation and retaining private property.

This was followed by a campaign in the Egyptian press and literature popularising and elaborating the idea of Arab co-operative socialism.

The idea of social reorganisation of society through the co-operatives is not new. The organisers of the first capitalist marketing co-operatives—the Rochdale weavers in England back in 1844, intended, through the co-operative stores, to change not only distribution and consumption, but even production in the interest of the working people.

The revival in mid-20th century Egypt of the idea of Utopian co-operative socialism can undoubtedly be ascribed to the immaturity of Egyptian capitalism and to the poor organisation and undeveloped state of the labour movement. With the basic means of production following the July 1952 Revolution concentrated in the hands of private owners, the co-operatives were powerless to do away with the exploitation of the majority by the minority. Furthermore, with the development of capitalism, leadership of the co-operatives in Egypt fell into the hands of the bourgeoisie, who used it to increase their own profits.

Developments in Egypt reconfirmed the correctness of Lenin's thesis to the effect that "in the capitalist state, co-operatives are... collective capitalist institutions".<sup>1</sup> And although considerable masses of the population were drawn into the co-operatives in the years immediately following the July Revolution, the means of production were not combined either in the urban or rural co-operative societies, there were practically no producers' associations and the co-operatives as such held a minor place in the country's commodity circulation.

We should not, however, underestimate the fact that the co-operative societies at that period played a definite role in defending the interests of the workers and other consumers against the trading capitalists. They also helped the peasants to receive loans, seed and fertilisers and to acquire machines and implements which the peasant could not buy on his own. Co-operative marketing ensured him better prices. All these factors undoubtedly tended to raise the political self-consciousness of the Egyptian working people. Subsequently these mass co-operative organisations in town and country were used by the revolutionary democrats in their struggle against private enterprise of the local bourgeoisie and the survivals of feudalism in the country.

The emphatic refusal of private capital to make its contribution towards Egypt's plans of economic development confronted the country's revolutionary democratic leaders with the question of establishing control by the state, by the people, over the basic means of production within the country.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 472.



An increasing influence on the UAR's choice of a path of further development was exercised by the growing successes achieved in the socialist countries, by the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa and Asia, and by the revolutionary events in Latin America, notably the revolution in Cuba.

The consolidation of the world socialist system and weakening of imperialism created a new situation for the national liberation movement in Africa and specifically in the UAR. This situation left its deep mark on the further inner-political measures of the revolutionary democrats in the UAR.

A cleavage took place within the ranks of the national forces: two camps were formed, each of which proposed its own path of development. One camp, which included the big and middle bourgeoisie, gave conditional support to the revolution, but pursued its own selfish, narrow class ends and went out of its way to promote the country's development along the capitalist path. The other camp, represented by the broad masses, including the middle strata, was more and more inclined towards the non-capitalist path of development. Its interests came into obvious conflict with those of the big and middle bourgeoisie. The leaders of the Egyptian revolution, with the help of the working people and the army, succeeded in guiding the country along a path that fell in with the interests of the broad masses of the people.

The nationalisation in February 1960 of the National Bank of Egypt and the Misr Bank was an important step towards the development of the July Revolution and signified that the aims of the revolution went beyond the limits of the narrow class interests of the national bourgeoisie. The line at nationalisation meant that the revolution was developing along the path of socio-economic reforms.

Later on the state took over the bus service in Cairo, and the trade in basic drugs and chemicals, and handed over the newspapers and printing shops to the National Union. At the end of 1960 the government nationalised the branch of the Bank of Belgium, the share of Belgian stockholders in other companies, and the Misr Jadid firm of building contractors.

As a result of these acts by the UAR Government the share of the state sector rose still higher. The funds of the Economic Organisation of Egypt as on June 30, 1961 amounted to

£E84,000,000. The output of the industrial companies alone, which belonged to or were controlled by the EOE, was estimated at £E105,000,000 in 1960 as against £E66,000,000 in 1957. The total number of workers and other employees at enterprises belonging to or controlled by the EOE rose from 53,000 in 1957 to 80,000 in 1960.

From the middle of 1961 the extension of the state sector in the UAR proceeded mainly due to the nationalised companies and enterprises belonging to the big local bourgeoisie, and somewhat later to some of the middle bourgeoisie.

To mark the occasion of the ninth anniversary of the July Revolution President Nasser issued a number of decrees between the 19th and 23rd of July 1961 putting all banks and insurance companies, transport, foreign trade, most of the industrial and big commercial enterprises, internal wholesale trade, etc., into possession or under the control of the state sector. By August 1961 as many as over 400 big enterprises and companies were nationalised and taken over by the state sector. In January 1962, August 1963 and March 1964 enterprises belonging mainly to the middle bourgeoisie were nationalised. As a result of these measures the country's economy came under the control of the state. The Egyptian bourgeoisie was deprived of property to the value of £E1,000 million. At the present time the private sector in industry owns only a few medium and small enterprises and domestic-craft workshops, which have no say in the country's industrial development.

Progressive leaders in the UAR began to realise more and more clearly that depriving counter-revolutionary elements of their economic weapons was only one aspect of the matter. To successfully develop the revolution and ensure social and economic progress it was necessary to draw the labour sections of the population, first and foremost the workers and peasants, into wider and active participation in the building of the new life.

For the first time in the revolutionary practice of the emergent young states the Government of the UAR enacted a law by which no less than half the vacancies in all state and political elective bodies were to belong to representatives of the workers and peasants. This was an act of great historic significance. Simultaneously, reactionary elements were



banned from political participation in the life of the country—they were deprived of the right to vote.

The government's policy found a keen response and support among the working people of the UAR. At the same time it was brought home more and more clearly to the Egyptian revolutionaries that a good deal had still to be done to engage the broad masses in the work of building the new society. President Nasser, on September 28, 1961, stated bluntly that "the people are insufficiently organised and are not yet aware of their rights and duties". The first successes of the nationalised enterprises convinced the leaders of Egypt that they were able to run the economy and develop it in the national interest. For this they need a new social mainstay, the most active participation of the working people in the development of social production.

By this time the idea of Arab socialism had undergone serious changes, especially in the part that concerned classes and the class struggle. While recognising the existence of classes, the Egyptian revolutionary democrats had previously rejected the idea of the class struggle as the motive force of society's development. While not denying the existence of class contradictions, they spoke about the need of resolving them in a peaceful way. In July 1961 Nasser said: "We want to solve the problem of class contradictions by way of peaceful settlement. . . ." But four months later, bearing in mind the experience of nationalisation of big and partially medium private capitalist property within the country and under the influence of Syria's secession from the UAR, the President declared: "The struggle proceeded with variable success. It was a class struggle. . . . We tried to solve the problem within the framework of nationalism. . . . We failed to resolve the contradictions in a peaceful way."

This change of views was dictated mainly by the logic of social development. Polarisation of social forces was taking place in Egypt, which clearly proved to the Egyptian patriots that the country could not achieve economic independence along the path of capitalist development.

The entire course of events in Egypt after the July 1952 Revolution showed that the landowners and big bourgeoisie in league with the foreign monopolies offered desperate resistance, and sometimes even resorted to open acts of armed

revolt against the social and economic reforms that were being carried out in the country. Thus, the attempts of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary democrats to resolve the class contradictions in Egypt by way of "a harmonious fusion of interests" between the bourgeoisie and the working people were, as they themselves admitted, a complete failure. Life showed how unfounded were their hopes for class harmony and made them realise the need for implementing the revolutionary laws of 1960-1964, which exercised a profound influence on the basis of Egyptian society. Changes in the basis involved further steps by the Egyptian revolutionary democrats aimed at changing the superstructure.

In February 1962 elections were held to the National Congress of Popular Powers, which was to endorse the Charter and map out the paths of Egypt's further development.

Of the 1,500 delegates to the National Congress 675 seats were assigned to representatives of the working class and the peasantry, 570 to professional and non-manual workers and students, and 150 to representatives of national "non-exploiter" capital.

By Presidential Decree 250 persons, members of the Steering Committee, were included in the number of delegates to the National Congress.

This composition of the Congress allowed the revolutionary democratic leadership of the UAR to secure endorsement of the Charter, which, it was officially admitted, the previous composition of the National Assembly would never have approved.

It should be said that a sharp struggle developed at the Congress around the concept of who should be considered a worker and peasant. The further democratic development of Egypt largely depended upon this, since according to the Charter the representatives of these two social groups of the population were to have half the places in all elective state and public bodies. The findings of the *ad hoc* committee dealing with this question, arrived at after stormy sessions, were as follows: a peasant was to be considered a person who worked 25 feddans (10.5 hectares) of land on his own employing only the labour of his own family, and a worker—any person who received an annual wage of not more than £E500. Other questions, too, were sharply debated, such as



that of democracy, religion and so on. Attempts to name socialism in Egypt as "Arabian" or "Islamic" socialism were rejected.

On June 30, 1962, the National Charter was endorsed as a peculiar programme of economic, political and social development.

The Charter for the first time defined the aims towards which the UAR was aspiring. It gave an analysis of the forming pattern of society and mapped out the prospects of further development. The more important propositions of the Charter were incorporated in the Constitution which the President proclaimed on March 23, 1964.

The National Charter says that "the socialist solution to the problem of economic and social underdevelopment in Egypt—with a view to achieving progress in a revolutionary way—was never a question of free choice. The socialist solution was a historical inevitability imposed by reality, the broad aspirations of the masses and the changing nature of the world in the second part of the 20th century."<sup>1</sup>

And further: "This socialist solution is the only way out to economic and social progress. It is the way to democracy in all its social and political forms."<sup>2</sup>

The Charter speaks of scientific socialism in its concrete application to Egypt.

It establishes that "the right of each citizen to free medical care, whether treatment or medicine, would not become a commodity for sale and purchase.... The right of each citizen to receive education.... The right of each citizen to secure a job.... Insurance against old age and sickness must be provided.... Woman must be regarded as equal to man and... must therefore shed the remaining shackles that impede her free movement so that she might take a constructive and profound part in shaping life."<sup>3</sup>

The Charter states: "No citizen can be regarded as free to vote unless he is given the three following guarantees:

"—He should be free from exploitation in all its forms.

"—He should enjoy an equal opportunity to have a fair share of the national wealth.

<sup>1</sup> *The Charter*, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

"—His mind should be free from all anxiety likely to undermine the security of his life in the future."<sup>1</sup>

The Charter proclaimed the building of a socialist society as the general line of the people and the Government of Egypt.

The Charter provided for the establishment of a mass political organisation of the working people—the Arab Socialist Union (ASU). According to the Rules of the ASU no less than half its membership, like the members of all elective bodies in Egypt, should consist of workers and peasants. The doors of the Union were closed to feudalists and capitalists. The ASU began to take shape in 1963. Its organisations began to deal with the problems of the economy, the struggle against the exploiter elements, the liquidation of illiteracy and so on. A Problems of Socialism Institute was set up and the ban on the dissemination of Marxist literature was lifted. A study of the works of the classics of Marxism-Leninism was made part of the curriculum of the active ASU core. Normal status was restored to the Egyptian Marxists, who had previously been persecuted. They were enabled to take part in developing the ASU and in industrial and public activities.

In March 1964 a new provisional Constitution was adopted. Clause 1 of which read: "The United Arab Republic is a democratic socialist state founded on a union of the people's labour forces: the peasants, workers, soldiers, intellectuals and national bourgeoisie," the latter being understood as the "non-exploiter" sections of the bourgeoisie, that is, small producers.

"The economic foundation of the state," the Constitution went on to say, "is the socialist system, which forbids all forms of exploitation."

It would be a mistake, however, to think that with the adoption of the Charter and the new Constitution of 1964, which officially proclaimed that the development of social life in Egypt would be founded on scientific socialism, the ideas of genuine scientific socialism predominated. The victory of a definite ideology is a very complicated process that takes a long time and great efforts on the part of the revolutionary party.

The progressive socio-economic and political measures of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.



the Egyptian Government had the increasingly wide support and approval of the masses. This was strikingly demonstrated during the national referendum in March 1965 when Nasser was re-elected to a further 6-year term of office as President of Egypt.

At the same time these revolutionary democratic measures met with a hostile reception on the part of both the internal and external reactionaries. During the latter part of 1965 another anti-state plot was discovered engineered by the banned politico-religious organisation, the Muslim Brotherhood. The conspirators planned to commit acts of political assassination and sabotage. They intended to blow up industrial enterprises, set fire to public buildings, etc.

At the public trial held during December 1965-February 1966 it came to light that the conspirators had established contacts with and received financial and other assistance, including arms, from definite imperialist circles abroad. Provocateurs and adventurers, who brazenly called themselves the "Arab Communist Party" and set themselves anti-popular and anti-state aims, were also exposed at the trial. Naturally, this clique had no connection whatever with the true representatives of Marxist-Leninist ideology, who actively supported the revolutionary measures of the Egyptian Government within the framework of the Arab Socialist Union.

With the desperate resistance of the reactionary forces and the sharpening class struggle there inevitably arose the question of the character of state power in Egypt and the prospects of its evolving into a state of the working masses, first and foremost of the working class. Opinion on this question among the representatives of socialist thought in Egypt, however, was, and is still, seriously divided.

Failure to understand the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which consists in a strong fraternal alliance between the working class and non-proletarian masses, first and foremost the peasantry, and in a genuine comprehensive democracy for the overwhelming majority of the people, found expression also in the Charter.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not an abstract concept invented by Communists; it arises historically from the conditions of the struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Socialism, during the period of its formation,

is forced to overcome the resistance, often very violent resistance, of the reactionary forces of the old world, of the exploiter classes and the elements standing close to them. The working class needs the dictatorship of the proletariat not in order to establish its perpetual domination over other classes, but to do away with all exploitation of man by man and with the social inequality and class domination that accrue from it.

"This object cannot be achieved at one stroke," Lenin explained. "It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the reorganisation of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of running things in a petty-bourgeois and bourgeois way can only be overcome by a long and stubborn struggle."<sup>1</sup> It is for these purposes that the dictatorship of the proletariat is needed.

"All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable," wrote Lenin, "but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."<sup>2</sup> Most probably the dictatorship of the proletariat in Egypt, that is, the political rule of the working class, will, in our opinion, bear the features of a democratic dictatorship of the working people and will rest not only on the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, but on a union with other, non-proletarian working sections of the population. The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of acuteness of the class struggle, depends largely on power of resistance of the deposed exploiter classes and the elements standing close to them. The Egyptian reaction, like every other reaction, clings desperately to the old and the outworn. It offers stubborn resistance and does not stop at terroristic acts, sabotage and counter-revolutionary coups.

The historical experience of all countries, including that of Egypt, shows that the petty-bourgeois strata must inevi-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.



tably take its stand with one of the basic classes of modern society—either the working class, which stands for socialism, or the bourgeoisie, which stands for the capitalist system.

It would be a gross mistake to underestimate the revolutionary forces of the Egyptian intellectuals. They have done and are continuing to do a good deal towards developing the revolution in Egypt. But did the old structure of the machinery of state match the needs of the revolutionary process that was in progress within the country? Apparently it did not. "We also have the problem of government machinery," said President Nasser in his address at the meeting of the National Assembly on March 26, 1964. "We have to admit that despite all efforts it has not been developed to the extent that would enable it to serve the new society. It still holds itself superior to the people, assuming authority and unwilling to realise that it should be the servant of the masses."

The President pointed out that the development and greatest possible expansion of democracy was the chief instrument for doing away with bureaucracy and a guarantee that people's control would be able to take precedence over the executive power.

"The collaboration between the force of reaction and the exploiting capital must, therefore, collapse," says the Charter. "The road must then be paved for democratic interaction between the various working powers of the people, namely the farmers, workers, soldiers, intellectuals and national capital. The co-operation between the powers representing the working people is the legitimate substitute for the collaboration between feudalism and the exploiting capital."

This way of stating the issue—democracy for the people and dictatorship against reaction—is an objective reflection of the alignment of class forces in Egypt and of the phase of revolutionary democratic transition to socialism through which the country is passing. During the passage to a higher stage of social development a union of varied popular forces is bound to undergo changes if it is to avoid the effects of the centrifugal forces deriving from the different class interests represented by the working people and the national bourgeoisie.

"But whatever the form in which the transition from capitalism to socialism is effected," says the Programme of the

CPSU, "that transition can come about only through revolution. However varied the forms of a new, people's state power in the period of socialist construction, their essence will be the same—*dictatorship of the proletariat*, which represents genuine democracy, democracy for the working people."<sup>1</sup> Obviously, the logic of the revolutionary struggle itself will make the supporters of socialism in Egypt recognise this too as an essential condition for the building of a socialist society.

### SYRIA ON THE ROAD TO PROGRESS

A decisive role in the liberation of Syria from the yoke of colonialism was played by the victory of the anti-fascist forces in the Second World War and the general upsurge of the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement. Already in 1941 France was obliged to proclaim the formal independence of Syria and the neighbouring Lebanon. In 1943 elections were held to a national parliament and a government was formed based on a bloc of the national bourgeoisie and anti-imperialist-minded landowners. During the years of the war, however, Syrian territory was occupied by French and British troops, and power remained in the hands of the Anglo-French command.

The national forces—the proletariat, peasantry, national bourgeoisie and intellectuals—were compelled to continue the struggle for independence, demanding the withdrawal of foreign troops. The liberation movement found strong support in the attitude of the USSR. The Soviet Union, as we know, vigorously supported the demand by Syria and the Lebanon in the United Nations for the withdrawal of foreign troops from their territories. The attempts of the Anglo-French imperialists to retain an occupation regime failed. In 1946 Britain and France were compelled to withdraw their troops.

This opened up to the peoples of the first independent Arab republics of Syria and Lebanon the road to independent development and social progress.

<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 487.



Independent Syria, however, came up against great difficulties. The reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie and big landowners held strong positions and foreign capital still dominated the economy.

Development of the national productive forces was retarded by the survivals of feudalism, chiefly by the landowners' monopoly of the land and water. Industrial production was poorly developed. Its share in the national income was no more than 12 per cent. It consisted mostly of small enterprises based on manual labour. Industry, construction and transport in the middle of the fifties employed about 100,000 people, which was 2.5-3 per cent of the gainfully employed population. Of these only some 35,000 to 40,000 were employed at enterprises of the factory type.

Foreign, chiefly American, imperialists imposed new fettering agreements upon Syria. The striving of the masses to do away completely with the last vestiges of colonialism came up against the resistance of the reactionary ruling circles connected with imperialism. In December 1947 the activities of the Communist Party, the trade unions and other democratic organisations in Syria were banned. The reactionary anti-national policy of the rulers led to a sharpening of the anti-imperialist struggle. In March 1949 Syria's working people organised mass demonstrations against the shackling agreements with imperialism. They took an active part in the international manifestations in support of the liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America in their struggle against the aggressive policy of the USA. There was a growing unity of the national forces and a strengthening of their resistance to internal reaction. The progressive forces were headed by the Communist Party, set up in 1924, which was obliged to work in the difficult conditions of the underground.

During the years of Syria's politically independent development national capital gained ground. Making use of its considerable accumulations, the national bourgeoisie, with the financial support and protectionist policy of the state, made big investments in the economy. During the ten-year investment boom in Syria some dozens of up-to-date industrial enterprises were built, the area of cultivated lands was almost doubled, and a number of irrigation systems and

transport communications were built or modernised. Wider use was made of hired labour, especially at the cotton plantations and grain farms on the newly developed lands in the Al-Jazirah and Al-Furat provinces. Several influential groups of the national bourgeoisie were formed in the country. One group of five employers, for instance, owned the controlling block of shares in the country's largest textile company in Damascus—Khumassiya. A considerable capital was owned by the Haleb group of the Syrian bourgeoisie, which controlled the country's cotton-ginning, canning and partly textile industries.

Side by side with the growth of industrial capital, trade and money-lending capital retained its significance as an independent form of national enterprise. The commercial bourgeoisie was the largest and most influential section of the Syrian bourgeoisie. The reason for this was to be sought in the state of Syria's economy, in which capitalist relationships were poorly developed.

The Syrian bourgeoisie and national enterprise gained ground slowly and irregularly owing to the difficulties they came up against, such as lack of capital, a restricted home market, poorly developed transport, insufficiency of power resources and a shortage of equipment and skilled personnel. Other serious obstacles to social progress were created by imperialist intrigues and the opposition of the conservative section of the Syrian bourgeoisie.

The national bourgeoisie, which played a leading part in the ruling bloc, did not have the means to wage a successful struggle against the foreign monopolies and the internal conservative forces. The real force, which the national bourgeoisie used to defend its interests and step up the development of the national economy, was the state. The establishment and development of the state sector was a most important form of active interference in the economic sphere. It was created initially by way of nationalisation, with compensation, of the property belonging to the former colonial administration and concession enterprises of foreign monopoly capital.

The new stage in the general crisis of capitalism, which started in the late fifties, was marked by further growth of the anti-imperialist movement among the Arab peoples.



Already in 1954, as a result of the sweeping popular movement in Syria, the reactionary dictatorship of A. Shishakli fell. At the elections to parliament the progressive forces won a victory. A bourgeois government was set up, backed by the broad sections of the people. Syria embarked on the path of democratic development. By 1957 the state had taken over the Tobacco Company, the railways, the main power stations, the public services, the bank of issue, etc.

In the field of foreign policy the Syrian Government adopted a line of positive neutrality, non-alignment with aggressive military blocs and support of the decisions of the Bandung Conference. During the period of British, French and Israeli aggression against Egypt in 1956 Syria, like the other Arab countries, came out strongly in support of the Egyptian people.

The progressive line of Syrian policy met with a hostile attitude on the part of the United States and its allies. Relying on the reactionary circles within the country, the imperialists organised plots to overthrow the Syrian national government. An economic blockade of the country was proclaimed.

In the autumn of 1957 Israeli and Turkish troops were drawn up along Syria's frontiers, and the US Sixth Fleet was concentrated in the eastern part of the Mediterranean. An extremely disturbing and dangerous situation was created. The plans of armed aggression, however, were frustrated thanks to the determined position taken up by the Soviet Union, the Arab countries and other peace-loving forces throughout the world.

During the state union with Egypt (1958-61) the scale and importance of Syria's state sector were considerably expanded both as a result of the construction of new industrial capacities and the growing participation of the state in the banking and financial system and partial nationalisation of the big industrial and trading companies. The central government of the UAR, guided by the aim of creating an integral political and economic organism within the framework of a united Arab state, made serious efforts to mobilise internal sources of accumulation in Egyptian and Syrian areas, particularly by way of enforcing anti-feudal measures in the countryside.

The UAR Government started to implement the agrarian reform in the Syrian area while at the same time regulating the existing agrarian relationships in the Syrian countryside. The agrarian reform, however, was carried out from above, and very slowly.

To solve the problem of accumulation the government of the UAR, by a number of successive measures, established control over the banking system, and in July 1961 nationalised all the private banks in Syria. Some trade and industrial enterprises were nationalised, too, and the income from them added to the state budget.

Concentration in the hands of the state of some of the means of production in the basic industries, and control over exchange tended largely to stimulate and regulate the development of the Syrian economy. Planning principles were gradually applied to economic development. The five-year plan of industrialisation for 1959-1963 provided for the construction in Syria of 43 industrial enterprises, raising the figure of employment in the manufacturing industries to 100,000.

Nationalisation of the banks and companies in the UAR in July 1961 and other reforms hastened the break-up of the union of the Syrian bourgeoisie with Egypt. In September 1961 a coup d'état occurred in Syria, whose leaders announced Syria's secession from the UAR and the establishment of an independent Syrian Arab Republic (SAR). The big bourgeoisie and landowners took advantage of the coup to form a government and seize most of the seats in parliament. The elected Constituent Assembly passed a law under which some of the previously nationalised enterprises and joint-stock companies were returned to their former owners. The peasants began to be driven off the land which they had received under the agrarian reform. All this evoked profound dissatisfaction and resistance on the part of the masses and among the young officers. What with military coups and strife among different class forces the situation within the country was extremely unstable.

At the beginning of the sixties the national liberation movement in Syria entered a new phase of development characterised by the further sharpening of the class struggle. The lead in the political arena was taken by various petty-



bourgeois organisations. Following a series of military coups resulting from the ideological and political crisis among the Syrian national bourgeoisie, the Socialist Party of the Arab Renaissance (SPAR), called, for short, the Baath Party, seized power in the country in March 1963. The Baath Party was founded following the amalgamation of two parties—that of Arab Renaissance and the Socialist Party, which had arisen in the course of the Second World War. The Baath Party was officially founded in 1947. It was a nationalist, petty-bourgeois party uniting within its ranks intellectuals, students, junior officers, artisans, tradesmen and part of the peasantry and workers. By its appeals for socialism and national unity of the Arab peoples the Baath Party won over to its side young people and intermediate strata in many of the Arab countries (Iraq, the Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait and others), where branches were set up subordinated to headquarters in Damascus, known as the All-Arab Leadership of the Baath Party.

Although the Baath Party during 1956-1958 co-operated with the Communist Parties of Syria, Iraq and Jordan, its political line was strongly influenced by the Right-wing leaders (Michel Aflak, Salah ed-Din el-Bitar), who often made deals with the reactionaries and used the Party as an instrument of anti-communism. The class heterogeneity, instability, revolutionary adventurism and the shuttling from one extreme to another, which are characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie, bred strife within the Party between the Right and Left groupings. This struggle sharpened after the Right-wing Baathists seized power in Iraq in 1963 and instituted a reign of terror against the Communists and other progressive forces, which considerably weakened the influence of the Baath Party in all the Arab countries.

The early years of Baathist rule in Syria were filled with internecine strife and sharp political conflicts. The absence of political stability had an adverse effect on the country's economic condition. Plans of economic development fell short of target, the budget deficit increased, there was a recession in trade, and prices and unemployment rose. In the course of a sharp political struggle the Right-wing anti-communist leaders of the SPAR were removed from the political arena of Syria. The party leadership was completely

renewed. In February 1966 the Left wing of the Party took over the leadership of Syria.

Syria's party leaders and statesmen declared their firm intention of carrying out the decisions of the Emergency Conference of the Syrian Baath Party of March 1966, which envisaged the country's transition to a non-capitalist path of development, the purging of the Party of bourgeois elements and its conversion into "a party of workers, peasants and intellectuals". The desire was expressed "to build socialism on a scientific basis in accordance with the concrete conditions of the country and the interests of the working masses". The Party declared the need for establishing "the people's control over the means of production" and for broad co-operation with all "national progressive elements".

From March 1966 onward Syria's home policy has revealed a tendency towards socio-economic reforms based on the support of the working sections of the population—the workers, peasants and intellectuals, on co-operation with the socialist countries, and aimed at boosting the country's economy, at uniting national efforts and enlisting progressive elements to the business of running the nationalised enterprises and the government. Among the members of the government, besides Baath Party leaders, there were other progressive leaders, including a communist minister.

This, of course, did not quite solve the problem of achieving unity and co-operation among all progressive organisations in Syria. The forms of such unity could be varied. The Syrian Communist Party called for the establishment of a united front of all anti-imperialist, genuinely progressive forces fighting for socialism, or for such other form of unity as would tend to consolidate the existing progressive regime in the face of the internal and external reaction, to extend the socio-economic gains of the people and solve the problems of raising the living standard of the working people through their own activities and through developing democracy for the workers and peasants, for all the working masses.

The new Left Baathist leadership of Syria succeeded in implementing a number of important measures. It issued a law on nationalisation, under which the government took over control of enterprises in the textile industry, the cotton-ginning and food industries, and the major part of the



country's foreign trade. Together with the previously nationalised foreign and local banks, insurance companies and transport, these enterprises now formed the foundation of the state sector, which played a definite role in the country's economy. Foreign capital lost all its vantage ground. Strengthening of the state sector enabled a start to be made on the five-year programme of development for 1966-70, which provided for about 5,000 million Syrian pounds capital investments, of which two-thirds was to be used in the field of material production. Despite enormous defence expenditure, capital investments in these years amounted to 3,600 million Syrian pounds. Syria is now implementing her third five-year plan (1971-1975). In 1972 the state sector already accounted for over three quarters of industrial output. As a result of all these measures the big and middle bourgeoisie were isolated. In addition, the state expropriated the property of the big landowners. The state took over 1,600,000 hectares of land. The confiscated lands were distributed among the peasants. Practically throughout Syria 1,615 supply and marketing co-operatives were set up with a membership of 130,000, besides several dozen producer co-operatives and state estates. Freed from the dominance of the feudalists and landowners, the countryside became the mainstay of the existing order. The government established friendly relations with the USSR and other socialist countries.

The socio-economic measures of the Syrian Government brought the class struggle within the country to a head. In an effort to recover lost ground, the landowners and capitalists hastened to unite their forces. During two years following promulgation of the law on nationalisation the authorities discovered four plots. In order to foil the schemes of reaction the government sought the backing of the trade-unionist workers, the peasants and youth organisations, which had become a factor of growing importance.

The Tenth Congress of the ruling Baath Party was held in September-October 1968. The Congress endorsed the line of the Ninth Congress of the Party aimed at building socialism and urged the extension of socio-economic reforms. The decisions of the Congress underlined the need for co-operation among all progressive forces, for unity of the working class, democratisation of the state administration, co-operation

with all Arab workers' organisations, stimulation of the peasant, women's, youth and trade-union movements, the setting up of elected people's councils at all levels of the state executive power, strengthening of the army's ties with the working people, further development of the national economy, completion of the agrarian reform, improvement of the working people's social conditions and further improvement of friendship and co-operation with the progressive Arab and socialist countries and parties.

The decisions of the Congress stressed the need for working for an integral Arab socialist state and pointed out that the working people were the motive force of the Arab revolution on whose shoulders now lay the whole burden of creating an Arab socialist society, that socialism was the basic factor on the way towards the regeneration of the Arab nation and its unity.

The Baath leadership strove to use their tenure of office to create a balanced Party structure from top to bottom, right down to the enterprise and the village, and to increase their influence among the masses to the utmost. This process, apparently, is not proceeding as smoothly as the Party leaders calculated. For various reasons problems arose among the working class, the army officers and even the petty bourgeoisie, from whose midst that Party had virtually arisen.

It should be borne in mind that Syria, after winning independence, developed as a multi-party state. Among some sections of the working class and intellectuals Marxist ideas have been current for many years and the Communist Party enjoys prestige. The banned bourgeois parties still retained their influence over some sections of the population. Some of the officers, in joining the Baath Party, had not parted the idea that the army held a special place in the life of the country and therefore had to exercise a more active influence on its policies. These, apparently, are repercussions of the time when coups in Syria followed one upon the other and the army dictated its will to ministers.

Early in 1969 differences of opinion arose among the Baath leadership both on the question of the country's rate of development and ways of dealing with the Middle East crisis, and on the forms of co-operation with the neighbour-



ing countries, notably the UAR, as well as Iraq, where the representatives of another branch of that party were in power.

The Emergency Conference of the Socialist Party of the Arab Renaissance held in March 1969 was able to overcome these difficulties and map out a positive programme. Co-operation of the Baath Party with all progressive forces within the framework of a united anti-imperialist front was recognised as essential.

The working class and peasantry of Syria are stubbornly resisting the attempts of the reactionary section of the bourgeoisie and landowners to stalemate the initiated reforms aimed at remodelling the country's economic and social structure.

The Syrian Communist Party is endeavouring to consolidate the results of the implemented reforms and continue further along the road to social progress, to socialism. In the sphere of the national economy the Party advances a programme for creating a planned economy, proposes eliminating the survivals of feudalism in the countryside, extending the agrarian reform, enlisting the co-operation of the peasant masses in carrying it out, turning over to the poor peasants property rights in the land expropriated from the feudalists, stimulating the organisation of producing co-operatives on a voluntary basis and setting up state farms. "We are for strengthening and widening the state sector of the national economy," said Khalid Bagdash, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Syria, "especially by way of further construction, with the aid of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and other socialist countries, such major projects as the Euphrates Dam, enterprises of the national oil-extracting industry, an artificial fertiliser plant, a railway and others. Strong, and at the same time flexible measures are needed to prevent the revival of the big bourgeoisie, to gradually curtail the private capitalist sector, which retains important positions in industry and trade. We are for extending economic co-operation with the socialist countries in order to free Syria's economy from the arbitrary influence of the world capitalist market.

"Our Party wants to have state apparatus purged of elements that are hostile to the cause of socialist progress, it

wants the broadest democratic liberties granted to the workers (those in the trade-union movement in particular), the peasants, the revolutionary intellectuals, to all progressive parties, groups and movements, including the Syrian Communist Party.

"Prominent among our Party's slogans is the call for a progressive national front, which would include in organisational form the Baath Party, the Communist Party and all other progressive parties, groups and movements, which have taken shape historically in Syria."

In this connection it should be noted that the June events of 1967 in the Middle East intensified the striving towards creation of a progressive national front among all progressive parties and movements.

Unfortunately, some progressive nationalists allege that the call for the establishment of a national front is "a manoeuvre" of the Communists, who aim ultimately at "swallowing" the other progressive forces. This assertion is without foundation.

"Our Party," said Bagdash, "does not intend to 'submerge' anybody and will not allow itself to be 'submerged'. The progressive national front is a form of organised co-operation among all progressive forces in the struggle for the common aims which they proclaim. The most important result of the front's formation will be to strengthen the present progressive policy of Syria, to broaden its popular basis, give free rein to the energy of the masses and lend effective support to that policy.

"The existing regime in Syria is undoubtedly a national progressive power. That is why we supported and are continuing to support it. That does not mean, however, that the state of affairs in Syria is in full accord with the requirement of objective social development and with the demands which the complex political and socio-economic problems facing the country make upon it. The proposals made by our Party are a sincere attempt to mend this deficiency."

The Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party, following discussions at a number of enlarged plenary meetings, unanimously endorsed the general line of the Party based on the following three propositions: (1) to continue co-operation with the Left-wing Baathists and all other pro-



gressive forces both within the government and outside of it; (2) to stoutly and consistently defend the interests of the workers, peasants and all the working people; (3) to vigorously uphold the independence of the Party, its patriotic, internationalist platform, especially on political issues. In all its activities the Communist Party of Syria tries to combine these three propositions.

In June 1969 the Communist Party of Syria held its Third Congress in Damascus. It adopted important decisions confirming the Party's line at co-operation with the Syrian Baath Party aimed at eliminating the consequences of Israeli aggression of 1967 and advancing the Syrian Arab Republic's progress towards socialism.

During 1969 and 1970 Syria continued along the path of social progress, waging a struggle on two fronts: on that of internal construction, by steadily broadening and deepening socio-economic reforms, and on that of struggle against Israeli occupation of Arab territories.

The autumn of 1970 witnessed a further sharpening of contradictions within the ruling Baath Party. In November leadership of the Party and the country was assumed by Hafez el-Assad, Ahmed al-Khatib and others.

In a statement issued on November 16, 1970, the Provisional Regional Leadership of the Baath Party declared that it would pursue a policy of intensified anti-imperialist struggle, and progressive socio-economic reforms, and would strive to set up a national front of all Syria's progressive forces, to strengthen co-operation with Egypt and other progressive Arab states, to achieve unity among the Arabs and strengthen co-operation with the USSR and other socialist countries.

To help implement this programme the Syrian Communist Party agreed to have two Communists in the new government of Hafez el-Assad. Others to join the government were two members of the Arab Socialist Union and four members of the Arab Socialist Party.

On the invitation of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Soviet Government a Party and Government delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic led by Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Hafez el-Assad was on a visit to the Soviet Union from the 1st to the 3rd of February 1971. Both

sides noted with satisfaction that friendly relations between the two countries were developing successfully. They reaffirmed their determination to further develop co-operation on the basis of the Soviet-Syrian agreement of July 10, 1963 providing for a steady widening of economic and technical co-operation. The parties arranged to instruct the competent Soviet and Syrian organisations to continue the work of defining concrete objects of co-operation in the period of the third five-year programme of Syria's economic development (1971-1975). This programme provides for an 8.5 per cent annual growth of Syria's national income.

The USSR and SAR delegations expressed their readiness to continue the practice of exchanging opinions both on questions relating to the development of inter-party and inter-state relations and major international problems, and to this end to continue friendly contacts and meetings at different levels.

In accordance with the declaration of the Baath Regional Leadership of November 16, 1970, a provisional Constitution was proclaimed in January 1971 and in February a legislative body—the National Council—was set up in which the Baathists were joined by Communists, by members of the Syrian Arab Socialist Union, the Arab Socialist Party and independent delegates (altogether 173 persons).

Public organisations began to play a more effective part in carrying out internal reforms and organising resistance to Israeli aggression.

By a national vote held in March Hafez el-Assad was elected President of the SAR.

On April 3, a new government was formed led by General Abdel Rahman Khelfawi.

Twenty former ministers of Assad's cabinet and seven new ones were included in the new government. In addition to the Baathists, other progressive parties and organisations were represented on the government.

On April 17, 1971, in the Libyan town of Benghazi, President Assad of Syria, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Libya M. Qadhafi and President of Egypt Anwar Sadat signed an agreement for a federation of Arab republics.

On April 22, in accordance with a special edict of Presi-



dent Assad of Syria a thirteen-man commission was set up to draft measures for establishing a front of patriotic and progressive forces within the country.

This front is called upon to play an important role in rallying the democratic forces of the SAR and dealing with the major social, economic and political problems facing the nation.

On June 1, 1971, the National Council of Syria endorsed a law on local self-government. The law provides for the setting up of local councils in the provinces and other smaller administrative units. These councils are to consist mainly of representatives of the workers and peasants.

This form of local authority will undoubtedly make for more democratic conditions of life and will pave the way for further socio-economic reforms in Syria.

In August 1971, the State Security Tribunal of Syria sentenced to death in their absence five former leaders of the Baath Party, including former general secretaries Michel Aflak and Chibli el-Aissaimi, and former chairman of the Presidential Council Amine Hafez, who were found guilty of attempting to overthrow the existing regime.

On the invitation of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR a delegation of the National Council of the Syrian Arab Republic made an official return visit to the Soviet Union between October 17 and 27. The delegation was headed by the Chairman of the National Council Ahmed Khatib.

Apart from Moscow the delegation visited Tashkent, Samarkand, Bokhara and Volgograd. Everywhere they were given a cordial welcome.

Between November 21 and December 3, on the invitation of the Central Committee of the CPSU a delegation of Party functionaries of the Baath Party (Syria) led by the secretary of the Party's Tartus Regional Committee A. Hassan visited the Soviet Union.

The Syrian visitors made themselves familiar with the experience of the CPSU in party organisation work in the sphere of producer and consumer co-operatives and visited the Latvian and Uzbek republics.

Simultaneously the workers' and peasants' and youth organisations in Syria stepped up their activity. In November 1971 an enlarged plenary meeting of the Central Committee

of the Syrian Communist Party was held in Damascus and in December 1971 the Union of the Youth of the Syrian Revolution held its congress.

In February 1972 at a session of the National Council of the Republic, Fahmi al-Yusefi was elected Chairman.

In March 1972, the National Progressive Front was established, with its General Rules laying down the organisational structure, and a Charter serving as its programme document. The Front comprises the Baath Party, the Syrian Communist Party and the Arab Socialist Union, along with other parties, and its Chairman is Hafez Assad, the President of the Republic and General Secretary of the Baath Party.

The aims of the Front are to free the Arab territories occupied by Israel, ensure national unity and solidarity, prepare five-year economic development plans, strengthen the state sector and develop the co-operative movement. In inter-Arab relations the primary task is the achievement of Arab unity, above all between progressive Arab regimes.

The chief aim in foreign policy, the Charter states, is to struggle against Zionism, Israeli aggression and imperialism, led by the USA. The NPF will make every effort to strengthen friendship and encourage co-operation with the socialist countries and especially the Soviet Union. It will support national liberation movements and strengthen its solidarity with them.

The creation of the NPF for the first time in Syrian history and its experience could clearly have most important implications not only for Syria herself but for other countries too. It will serve the interests of strengthening national unity in Syria, mobilising her resources for the struggle against imperialism and Zionism, for the liberation of occupied Arab territories and the creation of a society of social progress.

K. Bagdash and D. Naame represent the Communist Party in the central leadership of the NPF. Thus, practical co-operation is under way between all the political forces in Syria acting under the banner of anti-imperialist struggle and social progress.

A Soviet Party and Government delegation headed by



K. T. Mazurov, member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee and First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, was in Syria on an official visit from February 21 to 26, 1972. Talks were held during which questions of Soviet-Syrian relations and the prospects for expanding and deepening them in the political, party, economic, trade and cultural fields were discussed.

The two sides confirmed their willingness to continue their efforts to develop such co-operation, which is in the interests of the peoples of both countries and promotes the struggle to repair the damage caused by Israeli aggression.

Following the talks a new agreement was signed according to which the Soviet Union undertook to give economic and technical assistance to the Syrian Arab Republic and which envisages further expansion of co-operation in the period of the third Syrian five-year plan in the oil industry, hydrology and hydro-geology, railway construction and other branches of the economy, and also in the training of cadres. The two sides mapped out practical measures to ensure more successful achievement of earlier inter-governmental agreements on economic matters.

The two sides noted that successful development of links between the CPSU and the Baath Party is a major factor in strengthening friendship and co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Syrian Arab Republic, and expressed a mutual interest in the further development of relations between the parties.

In April 1972 a CPSU Central Committee delegation attended the celebrations to mark the 25th anniversary of the foundation of Syria's ruling Baath Party.

A Syrian Party and Government delegation headed by President Hafez Assad, was in the USSR on an official visit from June 5 to 8, 1972.

During talks it was noted that the successful development of links between the CPSU and the Baath Party and between other public mass organisations of the two countries is an important factor in strengthening co-operation between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Syria. The two sides expressed a mutual interest in continuing to develop these links in the future.

Relying on the support of the USSR and other socialist countries, Syria is doing a great deal to solve important problems in the interests of the people. Syria's economic and military capability has increased in the last few years. Many important projects are under way to develop industry and agriculture. In this connection, the Euphrates hydroelectric power complex undertaken with Soviet assistance must be mentioned. When completed, it will represent a worthy monument to Soviet-Syrian friendship.

Comrade Khalid Bagdash, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party, was awarded the Order of the October Revolution on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday by a Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet decree of November 14, 1972, for his outstanding services to the communist movement, his active part in the anti-imperialist national liberation struggle and his major contribution to strengthening friendship between the Soviet and Syrian peoples.

In December 1972, the Syrian Premier A. Khelfawi resigned for health reasons. The new cabinet was formed by Mahmud al-Ayubi.

Syria's permanent Constitution, approved on March 12, 1972, after a referendum, proclaimed the Syrian Arab Republic a people's democratic, socialist state, and the Baath, the ruling party. Legal status was granted to the Progressive National Front, the federations of trade unions, peasants, women, students, the unions of revolutionary youth, handicraftsmen, athletes, professionals (teachers, members of the medical profession, lawyers, pharmacutists). All these organisations are represented on the People's Council, the country's supreme legislative body. It is laid down in the Constitution that the economy of the state is a planned socialist economy which has as its aim the abolition of all forms of exploitation.

In accordance with the permanent Constitution, an election to the National Council was held in Syria in May 1973. Muhammed Ali al-Halabi was elected its Chairman. President Hafez Assad of Syria stated in his address to the deputies that the Syrian people were fully determined to strengthen their unity, which was one of the key factors of success in the people's liberation struggle of Syria. He emphasised



once again the Soviet Union's friendly stand on the problems facing the Arabs.

Under the existing conditions the Syrian Communist Party considers that all the country's progressive forces should redouble their vigilance and increase their strength and unity in face of the attempts by reactionary Right-wing circles to cause a split in their ranks and undermine progressive reforms.

Drawing strength from the political consciousness and militant spirit of the workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals, all the Syrian working people, and from the solidarity of the international working class and the world socialist system, the progressive forces of Syria are looking to the future with confidence.

"The Soviet Union," said Bajbuja, a member of the Baath Party leadership, at the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU, "is helping our Arab country, Syria, to build the material and economic basis of the new society, is helping us to move along the road of socialist reforms within the country and also to stand up against aggression from without."

The experience of Syria shows that consistent pursuance of an anti-imperialist policy creates conditions for strengthening the national economies of developing countries, so that they are able to use their natural resources independently, in defiance of the interests of the foreign monopolies.

Soviet people are following the political and socio-economic measures being introduced in Syria with great interest, measures intended to consolidate democracy and transform Syrian society on socialist principles. Obviously the internal political unity of the people is one of the decisive factors in the task of mobilising the nation to resist its enemies and solving the problems of building a new life.

The creation of the National Progressive Front in Syria is clear evidence of the growing unity of all the anti-imperialist forces in the country. The Syrian experience in unifying the progressive forces is of great importance not only for Syria herself, but no doubt also for other peoples who have embarked on the path of independence and social transformation.

### FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALGERIAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The Algerian people's struggle for freedom and independence was a long, hard and sharp one.

Already in May 1945, a national insurrection broke out in eastern Algeria, which the French colonialists cruelly suppressed. About 45,000 patriots were killed.

The French imperialists, with the support of the American monopolies, were able to keep Algeria in a dependent position by imposing on it in 1947 a new statute under which power remained fully vested in the French governor-general.

The liberation movement developed with growing momentum.

The Algerian patriots came out against the use of Algerians in the war in Vietnam and against Algeria's membership of the NATO system. Peace committees were set up everywhere, anti-war meetings were held and signatures were collected under the Appeal of the World Peace Council.

In the course of the liberation struggle the unity of the national forces grew stronger. In the summer of 1951, on the initiative of the Communist Party, an Algerian front in defence of liberty was formed, which, in addition to the Algerian Communist Party, included national bourgeois organisations such as the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties and the Democratic Union of Algerian Manifesto with its affiliated Association of Ulama. The Algerian Front, however, existed only until May 1952. The inconsistency of the national bourgeoisie and the spread of anti-communism within its midst were some of the causes which led to the breakdown of the united front. The Communist Party continued its efforts to restore unity of the national forces.

In 1954 some of the members of the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties quitted the organisation and founded a political party of their own—the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN). On November 1, 1954, this party started an armed struggle against the French colonialists. A rebellion broke out in the Aures Mountains in south-eastern Algeria, and an Army of National Liberation was formed. Military operations spread to Kabylia. By No-



vember 1954 the forces of the armed insurgents were three-thousand strong. They struck heavily at the communications and bases of the French troops, set fire to depots and dumps and destroyed fortifications.

The Algerian people actively supported the rebellion. Members of all the national parties and organisations joined the FLN. It was supported by the peasants, the workers, the intellectuals, the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and even some of the feudalists. The FLN was actively supported also by the Communist Party. The operations of the Army of National Liberation, poorly armed though it was, created a serious threat to the French colonialists. By the autumn of 1955 the Army of National Liberation numbered 20,000 men. France increased her army in Algeria to 200,000. But the war of liberation steadily widened and spread to areas of the Oran Department.

The FLN was prepared to suspend military operations on condition that the Algerian people's right to freedom and independence was recognised, that France ceased to consider Algeria a French department, and that all political prisoners were released and repressions ceased. The French Government, however, would not hear of any parleying with the insurgents. It embarked on a path of violent suppression of the national liberation movement. Persecution and arrests of national leaders, especially Communists, started in Algeria. In September 1955 the French authorities passed a decision to dissolve the Algerian Communist Party. The strength of the colonial troops increased. By August 1956, 50,000 men of the FLN stood opposed to a 350,000-strong French army.

The struggle became a stubborn and protracted one. In the course of it the national forces steadily consolidated. The Congress of the FLN held in the Soummam Valley (in the Kabylia region) in August 1956 went on record for setting up an independent democratic republic, for implementing a radical agrarian reform and establishing new relations with France on the basis of equality and liberty. With the aim of strengthening unity of the national forces the Algerian Communists disbanded their armed detachments and included them in the Army of National Liberation. In 1957 the ANL started to use heavy machine-guns, mortars and even field

guns, established radio communication between the units and improved the work of the technical and medical services.

In May 1958 the ultra-colonialists raised a reactionary revolt in Algeria, which led to a change in the political situation in France. General de Gaulle came to power in France in 1958. On September 19, 1958, the FLN proclaimed Algeria a republic and set up a Provisional Government of the Republic of Algeria.

The French colonialists used the most barbarous means to crush the heroic struggle of the Algerian patriots. Over 800,000 French soldiers and police were trampling the land.

During the seven and a half years of war about 1,500,000 Algerians died at the hands of the foreign enslavers; some 8,000 villages were totally destroyed, and many roads, bridges, irrigation installations, etc., were demolished. The war led to a mass displacement of the population: about three million Algerians were forcibly removed to special "regrouping centres" set up by the French, which, strictly speaking, were concentration camps; over half a million villagers quitted their homes during 1954-1963 and moved into the towns to escape the French colonial beasts and seek a roof and food; 300,000 refugees sought asylum in Tunisia and Morocco; 400,000 were imprisoned or put into concentration camps.

Nothing, however, could break the freedom-loving spirit of the Algerian people. In September 1959 President de Gaulle officially recognised Algeria's right to self-determination. In the summer of 1960 he proposed starting talks for a ceasefire. This virtually implied recognition of the Algerian Government. By 1961 the Provisional Government of Algeria had been recognised by thirty states.

Talks were held between the French Government and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic during February-March 1962 which ended in the signing of the Evian Agreements by which France recognised the complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Algerian Republic and which announced a ceasefire. The Agreements provided for a Referendum on Self-Determination to be held in Algeria. The signing of the Evian Agreements signalled an end to the first, armed phase of the Algerian revolution.



The struggle in Algeria did not cease with the signing of the Evian Agreements however. The ultra-colonialists, who had set up a secret armed organisation (the OAS), resorted to methods of mass terror and physical extermination of Algerians. In the course of several months the OAS, with the connivance of the French authorities, embarked on an orgy of massacres and assassinations in Algiers, Oran and other cities. But the Algerian people were determined to carry out the ceasefire agreement.

The Referendum called for by the Evian Agreements was held in Algeria on July 1, 1962. Practically 100 per cent of the voters declared for an independent Algeria, which was officially proclaimed on July 3. The courageous struggle of the Algerian patriots was crowned with success. Algeria became an independent sovereign state. It was a great victory for the Algerian people, for the peace-loving forces of France and the rest of the world.

With the end of the national liberation war and achievement of independence Algeria entered the second phase of development of the revolution—the social phase, the objective and subjective preconditions for which had ripened in the course of the war.

The National Council of the Algerian Revolution adopted in June 1962 in Tripoli a new programme of the FLN defining the tasks of this new phase, and charting the main trend of the country's development, namely: strengthening of political and economic independence, liquidation of the consequences of colonial rule and feudal survivals and the building of a new society along democratic lines.

Basically, the Tripoli Programme of the FLN was close to that of the Algerian Communist Party adopted in April of the same year and orientating Algeria on a non-capitalist path of development as a necessary condition for building socialism in the country. Ideologically, as the Algerian Communists pointed out, the Tripoli Programme, while strongly influenced by the ideas of socialism, nevertheless remained a programme of the petty revolutionary bourgeoisie. But inasmuch as the political, economic and social guidelines of the FLN Programme fitted the new phase of the revolution, the Algerian Communist Party gave it its wholehearted support.

In the summer and autumn of 1962 the situation within the country became aggravated. Relegated into the background during the period of the national liberation war, the class struggle flared up with renewed intensity both within Algerian society and within the FLN after the signing of the Evian Agreements and especially after the adoption of the Tripoli Programme. Class and ideological distinction waxed into serious contradictions, notably into differences of opinion between the Left wing of the FLN and the General Staff of the National Liberation Army which supported it, and the Right wing of the FLN backed by the majority of members of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, who expressed the interests of the national bourgeoisie. Part of the army, incited by Right-wing officers and some of the ministers of the Provisional Government, refused to obey the Political Bureau of the FLN and carry out its decisions. Things reached a state when armed clashes ensued between the troops that supported the Political Bureau, which virtually exercised power in Algeria, and the troops which refused to recognise that power. The majority of the Algerian people, however, and their armed forces gave full support to the Political Bureau of the FLN during the elections to the National Assembly.

The first meeting of the National Assembly on September 25 solemnly proclaimed Algeria a People's Democratic Republic (APDR). The new government was headed by member of the Political Bureau of the FLN Ahmed Ben Bella.

The new government came up against great difficulties caused by the painful heritage of the colonial economy, and the ruin and destitution caused by the war, by the resistance of the most greedy section of the national bourgeoisie, who were prepared to forego the national gains and make a deal with the internal and external reactionaries.

Sabotage on the part of the European employers and skilled specialists and flight from the country of the bulk of the European population following the proclamation of independence aggravated still more the disastrous effects of the war. As a result Algeria's economy in 1962 found itself in the grip of a serious crisis. Industry, the banking system and transport were almost completely paralysed (up



to 85 per cent of all industrial enterprises were at a standstill), and there were over two million unemployed in the cities, not to mention the children and widows of those who had been killed and the war-disabled persons who stood in urgent need of material assistance.

In this difficult situation a sharp struggle developed in Algeria for determining the revolution's further course of development. A major issue was the question of the property of the European bourgeoisie who had fled the country. The national bourgeoisie, seeing in the acquisition of this property a chance of quick and easy enrichment and consolidation of their own positions, lost no time in taking the initiative. Algerian tradesmen, businessmen and speculators bought up for a song or took unauthorised possession of the movable property and real estate of the absent Europeans. The country was threatened with the rapid growth of bourgeois elements and ascendancy of a national bourgeoisie.

The Algerian working class, however, was able to avert this danger. At this stage of the revolutionary struggle a very important role was played by one of its most numerous detachments—the agricultural proletariat employed on the plantations and farms of the European colonists. The fact that it was the rural proletariat who found itself in the van of the struggle against the ascendancy of the national bourgeoisie constituted an essential feature of the Algerian revolution. This revolution had developed in a country where a capitalist sector had formed in agriculture possessing industrial features and fully developed capitalist relations of production. This made it easier for the agricultural proletariat to adopt the ideology of the working class and to take its place in the sharp anti-colonialist revolutionary struggle as one of its most active participants.

The plantation workers of Algeria, without waiting for instructions from above, began as early as the summer and autumn of 1962 to take over the abandoned property of the colonists. Workers' Self-Management Committees began to spring up on the farms and plantations taken over by the workers, whose major task was to safeguard the property under their control and restart production.

Strong opposition to the claims of the national bourgeoisie was demonstrated also by the urban proletariat, who began

to organise similar Committees of Workers' Self-Management at industrial enterprises and building sites and to take over control of shops, cinemas, hotels, housing, etc. Thus, thanks to the spontaneous, albeit quite purposeful revolutionary action of the Algerian working class, the material and organisational foundations were laid for the socialised sector of the national economy.

In March 1963 the Algerian Government passed a number of decrees, known as "the March decrees", legally formalising the conquest of the working people—the self-managed sector. Under these decrees the abandoned colonists' property was declared ownerless and was nationalised and placed under the control of the Committees of Workers' and Peasants' Self-Management.

An important landmark in the history of Algeria was the adoption in 1963 of the Constitution of the Algerian People's Democratic Republic, which consolidated the conquests of the revolution and mapped out further steps towards progressive development. The Constitution proclaimed the basic aims of the APDR to be: construction of a socialist society and abolition of the exploitation of man by man; elimination of all discrimination, especially that based on racial or religious grounds; guaranteed right to work and free education; a social policy in favour of the working people and a guarantee of their democratic rights and liberties; prosecution of an independent national policy in the international arena; the struggle against imperialism in all its manifestations; active support to the national liberation movements; a struggle for peace throughout the world, and so on.

Beginning with 1963 co-operation between the APDR and the countries of the world socialist system started to develop. The Soviet Union's effective and disinterested aid helped to overcome the painful effects of the war and consolidate Algeria's national independence.

In April 1964 a Congress of the FLN was held which adopted the Rules and new Programme of the FLN—the Algerian Charter. Regarding the FLN as "the vanguard organisation of the Algerian people", the Rules declare the aim of the FLN to be "the creation of a socialist society in which all forms of exploitation of man by man will be abolished. The FLN draws its strength from the masses of the



peasants, workers and revolutionary intellectuals". The Programme defined a wide range of objectives in the fields of the economy and the agrarian and cultural revolution. The Programme proclaimed self-management by the working people the basic principle of construction of the socialist society in Algeria.

Owing to the dedicated efforts of the Algerian working people and the resolute measures of the national leadership Algeria, with the fraternal help of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, succeeded in a short period—by the end of 1965—in largely coping with the acute economic crisis precipitated by the colonialists. The total volume of production (not counting the oil industry) by that time had reached 85 per cent of the 1958-59 level. Unemployment was considerably reduced compared with 1962 and great progress was made in the sphere of public education and health.

On June 19, 1965, Ben Bella was removed from office. Defining the aims of the new government, Colonel Houari Boumedienne declared its allegiance to the principles set forth in the Algerian Charter. He gave the assurance that changes in the leadership would involve no fundamental changes in internal or external policies and that the Algerian Republic would remain in the front ranks of fighters against colonialism and imperialism, for social progress and democracy.

After June 19 certain circles in Algeria began attempts to split the unity of the anti-imperialist and progressive forces, to strike a blow at the Left elements and arrest the progressive development of the Algerian people. Reactionary elements within the country grew noticeably more active and the class struggle was intensified.

On the night of December 14, 1967, a military coup was attempted. The group that raised a revolt against the government of Boumedienne was headed by Colonel Tahar Zbiri, former Chief of the General Staff of the Algerian Army. The rebels found no support among the army and the masses. The Algerian people, who had suffered all the hardships of a long and painful struggle, had no sympathy for attempts to solve internal socio-economic problems by way of civil war. With the aid of the air force and armoured troops the revolt was quickly liquidated.

At present the self-managed sector in agriculture accounts for about 40 per cent of all the cultivated area and 10 per cent of the gainfully employed rural population united in 2,000-2,500 farming collectives. This sector yields about 60 per cent of agriculture's marketable produce.

In the industrial sector the self-managed units run into over 400 enterprises in which 15,500 workers were employed at the end of 1964. This sector yielded at the time 20 per cent of the country's total industrial output, and in 1968 as much as 80 per cent (without the oil industry).

In addition, the self-managed sector embraces different units in the sphere of trade and public services in the cities and towns.

In the activities of the self-managed sector there are still certain failings of an objective and subjective nature, but there is no room for doubt that it is a form of socialised production and national ownership in the Maghreb countries.

With active support from the Algerian state the self-managed sector is capable of becoming a material basis for further developments of a socialist nature. It is no accident that self-management is an object of intense struggle between the supporters and opponents of the capitalist path of development and socialist orientation in Algeria.

Steps are being taken in Algeria, as in other Arab countries, to enhance the role of the state in the country's economy. Transport, the mining and tobacco industries and a number of other enterprises have been nationalised, a national bank has been established and insurance companies have been nationalised. The Algerian Government is giving special attention to consolidating the positions of the state in such a vital industry as the extraction and processing of oil and natural gas. A National Society for the extraction, transportation and sale of fuel oil (SONATRACH) has been established, a state-owned pipeline to the port of Arzew has been built enabling oil production to be raised to 50,000,000 tons a year, and the share of the state in one of the major companies engaged in the exploitation of the Sahara oil deposits—the SN Repal—has risen from 40.5 to 50 per cent. Following Israeli aggression against the Arab countries in the summer of 1967, the property and concessions of a number of American oil companies were attached and national-



ised; and in June and November 1970 eight foreign companies were nationalised, among them Anglo-Dutch Shell and the American Phillips Petroleum Company. The state also took over control of an Italian and a West-German company engaged in the extraction of Saharan oil. As a result, the share of the state in all stages of extraction, refining and marketing of oil products considerably expanded. For instance, the share of the state in 1970 rose to 30 per cent in oil production and to 80 per cent in refining. With the participation of foreign capital mixed companies were formed for oil refining and drilling.

In February 1971 the state took over 51% of the shares in all international oil companies in order to ensure effective control over them. Simultaneously all natural gas deposits were nationalised. As a result, in 1972 the state company Sonatrach assumed control of 77% of the country's oil production; 90% of the oil industry and complete control of natural gas extraction and the transportation and marketing of oil products. In addition, the Algerian state owns shares in a number of large companies in the manufacturing industry, such as the motor vehicle assembly, textile, clothing, metal-working and other industries.

By the end of 1972 the state controlled 70% of industrial production in Algeria, the farms, banks, foreign trade, hotels and catering establishments, large shops and cinemas. The private sector retained a considerable hold on retail trade, services and handicraft production. About 40% of the Algerian workers are employed in private establishments, which are nevertheless controlled by the state and do not play a decisive role in the Algerian economy today.

The "nation of martyrs and fighters", as President of the Revolutionary Council Boumedienne called the people of Algeria, have now taken things into their own hands and acquired confidence in their own powers.

And so we see that the Algerian people, having thrown off the shackles of colonialism, have made their choice in favour of socialism. The working masses are vitally concerned in implementing profound socio-economic reforms, in consolidating the self-managed sector, in speeding up economic progress, in liquidating unemployment and purging the state apparatus of reactionary and corrupt elements.

Consolidation of all the progressive, patriotic and socialist forces capable of standing up to imperialism and internal reaction and putting into practice the principles and aims of the Algerian Charter has become an essential condition for Algeria's further progress towards socialism.

In this connection the urgent need for deep-going reforms in the "traditional" sector of agriculture can hardly be overestimated. Land reforms, as President of the Revolutionary Council Boumedienne repeatedly stressed, are "an essential condition for genuine progress", which is unthinkable as long as the peasant masses "live in squalor and ignorance".

The rural population numbers approximately 8 million, or more than half the total population of the country. Only about a million are employed in the co-operative sector of agriculture. The "traditional" Algerian rural sector, i.e., the private sector has hardly been affected in the years since independence.

Three per cent of landholders in Algeria own a quarter of all the cultivated lands. The share of over half the peasants is barely one-tenth. Three quarters of the peasant farmers have less than 10 hectares of land—the essential minimum for a very frugal life of one family in Algerian conditions. About half a million families have no land at all. Such are the contrasts of landownership outside the framework of the self-managed sector. Inequality in land distribution is a major cause of the low standard of living among the peasant masses, and this, in turn, hampers modernisation of industry. This is pointed out in the Project of Agrarian Revolution adopted in November 1971.

The agrarian reform envisages the limitation of landed property aimed at "equalising chances among all rural dwellers" and "preventing the rise of a class that could become an exploiter class". The law provides for the further consolidation of the self-managed sector and the wide development of co-operation in agriculture with the material and technical aid of the state.

In 1972 an inventory of lands belonging to religious and charity organisations, and state and other lands affected by agricultural reform was begun. In 1973 private lands were being registered. Large holdings are to be divided up and transferred to needy peasants.



The planned programme of agrarian reforms is being implemented successfully. By the year 1973, about 700,000 hectares of public land had been distributed among 50,000 landless and land-hungry peasants united in their overwhelming majority in over 2,000 co-operatives. In the meantime the Algerian Revolutionary Government was mobilising the working people to fulfil the four-year national economic development plan for 1970-1973.

The preamble to the plan stated that Algeria was entering upon the decisive stage of economic construction and the building of a modern society dedicated to the service of man. To achieve these objectives, stated the preamble, the revolution would lean on the construction of a socialist society.

"This plan," said Boumedienne, "is aimed at achieving three main objectives: the industrial, agrarian and cultural revolutions. The interaction and mutual complementation of these three tasks should lead to the radical reconstruction of the colonial structure, which Algeria has inherited, and to the country acquiring its own real face."

The Algerian four-year plan envisaged an annual growth of 8.2 per cent in overall output. To ensure this intensive growth it was planned to devote a third of the national income every year to capital investments. In four years the total of state investments has amounted to the enormous, for Algeria, sum of 26,400 million dinars, with private investments planned at only 1,600 million dinars. Three quarters of these investments have been raised from internal sources.

At the centre of the plan was the development of industry (about half of all investments), including heavy industry. Algeria's planning agencies proceeded from the assumption that industrialisation was a *sine qua non* of economic progress, an essential means for ensuring economic independence. By the end of the plan period, the state has owned 85 per cent of the means of production in industry. Agriculture has come next in the level of capital investments. Important measures were planned to raise the harvest yield, fight soil erosion, etc.

Realisation of the four-year plan has, of course, demanded the greatest possible mobilisation of the country's financial and material resources. The success of the four-year plan, as the Algerian press rightly points out, depended in equal measure on the active participation of the masses in its real-

isation. The fullness of this participation depended upon the degree to which the plan's realisation would meet the needs of the country's socialist orientation and the interests of the working people.

The results of the four-year plan show that the basic targets have been achieved in many branches.

In 1972 the Algerian Government examined the prognoses for the country's development in the period 1974-1980, that is, for the period immediately following the current plan.

According to the plan targets, the eighties should see the elimination of Algeria's economic backwardness.

The consistent anti-imperialist activity of the government of Boumedienne aimed at building up an independent Algeria and developing its economy in the interest of the working people creates favourable opportunities for achieving mutual understanding and co-operation with all sincere revolutionaries and fighters for the country's socialist future, including the Parti de l'avant-garde socialiste in Algeria. Although this Party's proposal for a dialogue with the ruling FLN Party has not yet yielded desirable results, the need for it is becoming more and more evident, as there are still many counter-revolutionary elements in the country who are opposed to Algeria's socialist orientation. At the beginning of 1970 the Algerian police arrested a group of people belonging to the illegal organisation Al-Qiyam. These anti-government elements, on the pretext of safeguarding the "purity of Islam", wanted to wreck the efforts at consolidating the revolutionary gains of the Algerian people.

An important role in solving the country's major problems is to be played by the Algerian youth, bearing in mind that 57 per cent of the country's population are young people under twenty. In this connection the ruling FLN Party posed the task of creating an organisation that would unite in its ranks the broadest strata of Algeria's youth.

Calling upon the young people to set up an integrated organisation capable of coping with all difficulties and founded on the principles of support to the ruling FLN Party and the revolutionary government, Boumedienne said: "I am firmly convinced that we are at a stage of action and activity and that you will correctly assess the historical realities, which demand that Algeria's youth be in the van-



guard of the struggle, in which we have already achieved victory in the past and will win still more remarkable victories in the future."

Of great importance for the development of the Algerian revolution was the visit paid to Algeria in October 1971 by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Alexei Kosygin.

The joint Soviet-Algerian statement says that "in the interest of developing and consolidating the economy of the Algerian People's Democratic Republic the Soviet Government expressed its readiness to extend economic and technical co-operation with Algeria for the purpose of carrying out the four-year plan and assisting in the development of the Algerian economy.

"The two sides agreed that it was necessary to continue strengthening mutual contacts in the spheres of scientific and technological exchange, education, public health, art, radio, television, the cinema and sport.

"During Kosygin's sojourn in Algeria an Algeria-USSR Friendship Society was established in the country. Both sides expressed their firm conviction that this society, like the USSR-Algeria Society already functioning in the Soviet Union, would actively promote all-round co-operation and strengthen friendly relations between the Soviet and Algerian peoples.

"In the course of the talks attention was devoted to the relations between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the National Liberation Front, which headed the revolutions in their respective countries and were the ruling parties in the USSR and the APDR. It was decided to arrange effective co-operation between these parties, which expressed the hopes and desires of their peoples, with due respect for the national prerogatives of both parties."

A CPSU delegation headed by S. R. Rashidov, alternate member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and First Secretary of the CC, Communist Party of Uzbekistan, was in the Algerian People's Democratic Republic from June 5 to 13, 1972, on the invitation of the FLN. An agreement was reached on the development of relations between the two parties.

Premier Houari Boumedienne of Algeria stayed on a

friendship visit in the Soviet Union from October 14 to 15, 1973. At the Algerian-Soviet talks, a friendly and frank exchange of views was held on the aggravation of the Middle East situation caused by the Israeli imperialist aggression, as well as on other vital international problems. Problems involved in the continued promotion of Algerian-Soviet co-operation were also discussed.

Soviet people greatly admire the successes achieved by the heroic Algerian people in various fields since independence. They can serve as an example to the peoples of the developing countries struggling for social progress and emancipation from neo-colonialist domination.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR CHOICE OF A PATH IN IRAQ

Iraq for a long time was in bondage to British imperialism, which had the backing of feudal reactionaries within the country. The peoples of Iraq fought hard against the oppression of the colonialists and the local mercenary clique. After the Second World War a movement was launched in the country for abrogating the inequitable treaty of 1930 with Britain, for liquidating military bases and withdrawing British troops.

In the forefront of this movement stood the working class led by the Iraqi Communist Party.

In 1946 the Democratic Party of Kurdistan was founded. It has consistently campaigned for national autonomy for the Kurds, who form about a fifth of the population of Iraq, within the framework of a single united Iraqi state.

In January 1948 the rulers of Iraq signed another agreement with Britain, which retained, in a masked form, the shackling terms of the 1930 agreement. As soon as this deal became known a revolt broke out in Baghdad—the capital of the "Middle-East Bastille"—which quickly spread to many other cities. The people's struggle was crowned with success—the agreement was annulled.

The Palestine war of 1948 provoked by the Anglo-American imperialists, Zionists and Arab reactionaries, one of the aims of which was to defeat the national liberation movement throughout the Middle East, served as a convenient pretext for suppressing the revolutionary movement



in Iraq. On the pretext of "securing the rear for the conduct of war" the Iraqi reactionaries on May 15, 1948 proclaimed a state of emergency. A reign of terror by reactionaries and police started in the country.

In February 1949 the government of Iraq perpetrated a heinous crime: Yusuf Salman Jusuf (Fahed), General Secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party, and Central Committee members Zaki Mohammed Basim and Hussain Mohammed ash-Shabibi were sentenced to death by a military tribunal and hanged.

Clearing the way for Iraq's adherence to the Baghdad bloc and for turning its territory into a base for United States and British aggression against the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the national liberation movement of the Arab peoples, the Iraqi Government passed a number of draconian laws. Parliament was dissolved, political parties, cultural, sport and religious societies and clubs, trade-union organisations of the workers, and professional associations of the intellectuals and bourgeoisie were disbanded, all opposition newspapers and journals were closed down, and all meetings and demonstrations were banned, the police being given the right to break them up with the use of firearms. In 1954 the Iraqi Government broke off diplomatic relations with the USSR and in 1955 joined the aggressive Baghdad bloc.

Iraqi reaction was congratulating itself too soon, however. Even in those darkest days of reactionary regime the process of consolidation of the national forces in Iraq still went on. Increasing sections of the working class, the peasantry, the national bourgeoisie, intellectuals and the army were being drawn into the struggle against imperialist domination, for the annulment of shackling treaties and agreements, for withdrawal from the Baghdad bloc and for democratisation of the regime. As in the early post-war years the working class, led by the Communists, marched in the van of this movement.

The years 1955 and 1956 saw the build-up of a wide peasant movement in Iraq, where at that time 2 per cent of landholders owned 68 per cent of the cultivated area. In the summer of 1955 over twenty thousand peasants in the Amara Province—the citadel of feudalism in Iraq—seized the crops

and divided the landed estates among themselves. The aid of a police division was needed to restore "order", in the course of which many peasants were killed or thrown into prison and concentration camps.

Peasants' riots occurred in the Kut Province during April-May 1956. There, too, peasants had seized the lands of the landowners and refused to pay feudal rent. To suppress these riots the police were reinforced with mechanised army units. In the course of restoring "order" over 200 people were killed and many hundreds more wounded.

The greatest event of the year, however, was the national rebellion at the end of 1956 following the Anglo-Franco-Israeli aggression against the Egyptian people.

During this uprising co-operation among the country's patriotic forces was consolidated, making it possible to set up a national front. Organised at the beginning of 1957, this front (officially known as the National Unity Front), in addition to the Communist Party, comprised the national parties of the bourgeoisie—the National Democratic Party, the Istiqlal (Independence) Party, the Baath Party and various non-party opposition elements.

Both in composition, ideology and structure and in its political aims the Front represented a coalition of various national forces expressing the interests of the working class, peasantry, national bourgeoisie, intellectuals, liberal landowners and a section of the civil servants.

The most urgent task of the National Front was to enlist to the side of the revolution all opposition elements within the country, first and foremost in the army, which was the last serious prop of the regime.

The Supreme National Committee of the Front, consisting of representatives of the four parties, established contact with the opposition groups in the army, notably with a group of officers under General Abdul Karim Kassem. On July 14, 1958, the army, with the active support of the popular masses, carried out a national revolution in Iraq. The undivided rule of the feudal-landowning clique and the royal family came to an end. The country was proclaimed a republic. Key positions in the government and the Council of Sovereignty (exercising presidential powers) were in the hands of senior army officers, General Kassem became Prime



Minister of the Republic, and Colonel Abdul Salam Aref, whose troops had captured Baghdad, became Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior.

The revolution of July 14, 1958 bore the character of an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution. Its motive forces were the working class, the peasantry, the national bourgeoisie and intellectuals. The victory of the revolution was made possible through the joint efforts of all the patriotic forces united in the National Front. In the front ranks of the fighters for liberation marched the Communists, who, despite harsh repressions, had never for a moment ceased their heroic struggle to deliver Iraq from the bonds of Anglo-American imperialism and the local royal and feudal clique who were wholly subservient to it.

At the initial stage of the revolution the government of the Iraqi Republic, leaning on the unity of the national forces, broke with the aggressive Baghdad Pact, rejected the Eisenhower doctrine, liquidated British military bases on Iraqi territory, withdrew from the sterling bloc, suspended old agreements which infringed the country's sovereignty, set up a national oil company and enforced a number of other measures which put an end to the undivided rule of the imperialist companies.

Simultaneously, the revolutionary government established and began to develop friendly relations with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and fruitful co-operation on mutually advantageous terms.

During this period of general revolutionary upsurge the government of Kassem, backed by the broadest sections of the population, carried through important reforms which had beneficial effect on the life of the country. On September 30, 1958, a law was promulgated instituting a land reform, various privileges were abolished, and the property of the royal family and traitors was confiscated. This greatly undermined the economic and political positions of the feudalists, the tribal sheikhs and other reactionary elements within the country. On the initiative of the Communist Party workers and peasants set up trade unions and peasant associations, which were subsequently recognised by the government. Public organisations such as the National Peace Coun-

cil, the League of Iraqi Women, the Federation of Democratic Youth, the National Union of Students, and others emerged from the underground or were created anew. Freedom of the press was restored and the Communist Party was able for the first time to publish its newspapers and journals.

Regarding imperialism as the chief enemy, the Communist Party supported all progressive measures that were being enacted within the country and took the lead in rallying all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces in a united national front and trying to keep the bourgeoisie in the camp of the national movement and unite them with the people. At the same time the ICP continued as before to show up the reactionary aspects of the policies of the ruling circles and the vacillations of the bourgeoisie, to defend the vital interests of the masses and head the struggle for Iraq's democratic development.

During the early months of the revolution the Iraqi bourgeoisie was not in a position to prevent the working people from taking part in the country's political life. Before long, however, the class nature of the national bourgeoisie, its vacillations and inconsistency began to reveal themselves.

Frightened by the powerful growth of the popular forces, the Iraqi bourgeoisie took a sharp swing to the Right. This was manifested first of all in the Communist Party being refused the right to legal existence. A law was promulgated on January 1, 1960, permitting the activities of political parties and organisations. The Iraqi Communist Party, too, applied to the government for permission to carry on legal activities. The Minister of the Interior, while giving such permission to the opportunist adventurist group led by the renegade Daud Saig, refused to legalise the true party of the Communists. Simultaneously, attacks were made on the trade unions, the Federation of Democratic Youth and other public organisations.

Kassem grew more and more afraid of the people and consolidated his one-man dictatorship. He dismissed all the ministers who had come to power with him, began to persecute members of the democratic organisations and started military operations against the Kurds. His foreign policy, including claims to Kuwait and to the role of leader of the



Arab world, adversely affected Iraq's international situation. All this led to Kassem's complete isolation from the people, from the progressive forces. On February 8, 1963, a coup d'état was effected. Kassem was overthrown and executed. Power passed into the hands of the Right wing of the bourgeois Baath Party. This coup sparked off an unbridled campaign by the reactionary elements. A campaign of terror was let loose against the Iraqi Communist Party. Thousands of Communists were thrown into prison, hundreds were shot, tortured or executed. Hussain Ahmad ar-Rady (Salam Adil), first secretary of the Central Committee of the ICP, Gamal al-Khaidari, Mohammed Hussain Abu-al-Iss, Mohammed Salih al-Abli and many other leaders of the Party fell at the hands of the bloody executioners.

Imperialism and internal reaction exulted. The Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in 1969 noted in its document: "Imperialism provokes friction in developing countries and sows division between them by encouraging reactionary nationalism. Through anti-communism it tries to split the ranks of the revolutionaries in these countries and isolate them from their best friends—the socialist states and the revolutionary working-class movement in the capitalist countries."

The Iraqi Communists received the first blow struck by reaction. Repressions then spread to the bourgeois-democratic organisations and parties and the various nationalist groups. Events were to confirm once again that repressions against the Communists were the first step of reaction in its attack upon the democratic and progressive elements. In June 1963 government troops resumed their war of annihilation against the Kurds in an attempt to drown in blood that people's just demand for equal national sovereignty within the framework of the Iraqi Republic.

Right-wing Baathist terror aroused angry protest among the world's progressive public and profound dissatisfaction among the masses at home. These circumstances led to another coup in Baghdad on November 12, 1963, directed against the extremist elements of the Baath Party. On November 18, 1963, power passed into the hands of the army led by Abdul Salam Aref. The new government arrested some of the Baathist leaders, disbanded the detachments of

the National Guard, declared "allegiance to the principles of the revolution of July 14, 1958", came out for closer relations with the UAR and supported "the principles of the United Nations, Bandung and Belgrade".

In February 1964 an agreement was reached to end the fratricidal war in Kurdistan and negotiations were started for a peaceful settlement of the Kurd problem. This judicious step was received with great satisfaction at home and appraised at its true worth by world public opinion.

On May 26, 1964, an agreement was signed between the Iraqi Republic and the UAR identifying the policies of the two states in the political, economic, military, social and other fields.

Nationalisation laws were promulgated in Baghdad in the summer of 1964 under which the state took over the banking system, insurance companies, the big trading companies and a number of enterprises of the manufacturing, building and food industries with a total capital of 25,500,000 dinars. Certain decrees were passed in the interest of the workers, notably those granting them the right to 25 per cent of the profits of the state and mixed enterprises and participation in the management of the nationalised enterprises. A five-year plan was adopted covering the period 1965-1969 and envisaging an 8 per cent annual growth in national income and 12 per cent growth in industrial output. Over 45 per cent of capital investments were to go to industrial and agricultural production.

All this was supported in principle by Iraq's progressive forces and regarded as a step forward in creating the conditions necessary for the transition to a non-capitalist path of development.

A certain relaxation took place in the political life of the country as well. Killings of Communists and democrats ceased, although thousands of patriots still languished in prisons and people engaging in democratic activities were persecuted. The Kurd question too was dragging. Neither had the agrarian question been settled. According to the agrarian reform of 1958, 3,000,000 hectares of land were to have been expropriated from the landowners, but by May 1969 only 1,750,000 hectares had actually been expropriated, of which only 625,000 were distributed among the peasants.



Non-fulfilment of the agrarian reform left 90 per cent of the rural population landless or land-poor, while 10 per cent of the landholders owned 70 per cent of the cultivated area. Iraq's feudalists retorted to the feeble attempts to enforce the agrarian reform with underhand acts of terror.

As a result of the situation that had arisen in the Iraqi countryside and the sad plight of the urban population the plan of economic development during the first three years of the five-year plan was fulfilled to the extent of only 22 per cent. All this caused a split in the national ranks, deprived the Government of the Iraqi Republic of the active support of the democratic forces, and weakened it in face of the threat of counter-revolutionary plots hatched by imperialism and internal reaction, who resented the anti-imperialist line taken by the Government of Abdul Rahman Aref. (After the death of Abdul Salam Aref in 1966 his brother, General Abdul Rahman Aref, became President.)

Following the coup of July 17, 1968, the Baathists came to power again in Iraq. On July 30 a "coup within a coup" took place by which the progressive Baathist fellow-travelers were removed from the Revolutionary Command Council, Iraq's leading body.

The Syrian experience of co-operation established between the Baathists and Communists in February 1966 and the pressing problems of uniting all patriotic forces after the June war of 1967 made Iraq's new leaders take a more critical view of the infelicitous experience of the first administration of the Iraqi Baathists in 1963. They had to reckon with the fact that at the moment of the Baath Party's second rise to power the Communist Party of Iraq had recovered from the blows dealt it and had once again become a leading political force in the country. Moreover, socialist ideas had gained considerable ground in the Arab world in recent years and the prestige enjoyed by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries was greatly enhanced. The experience of the last few years, especially the lessons derived from the aggression launched in 1967, has shown that only co-operation with the socialist countries can create the necessary conditions for extending and deepening the revolutionary processes in the Arab world, despite all the schemes and intrigues of imperialism. All these circumstances led to the

new leadership of Iraq announcing in August 1968 that political prisoners arrested under the former regimes were to be released; President of the Republic Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr called upon all the national forces, including the Communists, to set up a united anti-imperialist front. "The Baath Party has recognised the need for a union with the progressives, first and foremost with the Iraqi Communist Party," wrote the newspaper *Al-Thawrah*, organ of the Baath Party of Iraq. "The ICP's activities are based on the concepts of scientific communism, which represents the interests of the proletariat; that Party has important ties with the broad masses of the people, a militant past, as well as international contacts with the socialist countries and Communist Parties, who support the Arab revolution."

This way of presenting the question testifies to the definite ideological evolution through which the Iraqi Baath Party is passing.

In May 1969 the Baathist government introduced major amendments in the agrarian reform law. It revoked compensation for expropriated landed estates and the right of the landowners to choose plots for themselves prior to expropriation, and also suspended payments by the peasants for the land which they received. What is more, it raised the question of making the landowners refund the moneys paid to them in past years by way of compensation. The Baathist government lowered taxes imposed on the peasantry, started to stimulate the co-operative movement and mobilised the masses for fulfilment of the five-year plan (1970-1974), which envisaged capital investments of 1,144 million dinars, of which 70 per cent were to be at the expense of the state. The plan is based on a 7.1 per cent annual growth of the national income. The new law on workers' pensions, too, was most effective. In March 1970 the Iraqi Government reached an agreement with the leaders of the Kurd national liberation movement. Under this agreement the nine-year fratricidal war in the north of the country was brought to an end and the Kurds' right to national autonomy within the framework of a united Iraq was recognised. The agreement was the result of the tremendous efforts made by all the progressive forces of Iraq, first and foremost of the Iraqi Communist Party, which, operating under illegal conditions,



firmly stood for a peaceful settlement of the Kurd problem.

After the signing of the agreement the Democratic Party of Kurdistan legalised its activities in different areas throughout the country. At the same time normal relations began to be established between the central authorities and the Kurd leaders. Five Kurds, three of whom were members of the Executive of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, received ministerial posts, and Kurds were appointed governors in five northern districts. The Peshmerga detachments (guerrillas) became a part of the country's forces of internal security. They were detailed, among other things, to guard the north-eastern section of the Iraq frontier. Funds were budgeted for making good the damage caused by the war, for building houses for the disabled and erecting schools, in which teaching began to be carried out in Kurdish.

In July 1970 was held the Eighth Congress of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, which outlined a programme for rehabilitation of the North, for the development of Kurd-Arab relations and for consolidating the unity of all patriotic forces in Iraq.

The same month saw the adoption of Iraq's new provisional Constitution, which proclaimed Iraq to be a sovereign People's Democratic Republic, whose main objective was to build a united Arab state and introduce the socialist system. The Iraqi people, states the Constitution, consists of two basic nationalities—the Arabs and the Kurds. The Constitution recognises the national rights of the Kurds and the legitimate rights of all the minorities within the framework of a united independent Iraq.

In September 1970 was held the Second Congress of the Iraqi Communist Party, which reaffirmed its view, that in order to deal effectively with the progressive tasks it was necessary to unite all patriotic and anti-imperialist parties, organisations and forces within the ranks of a national progressive front, which would undertake to carry out those tasks within the country.

"Our demand for democratic liberties and our striving to set up a national progressive front," said Aziz Mohammed, First Secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party's Central Committee, in his speech at the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU in April 1971, "enjoy the wide support of the popu-

lar masses and patriotic organisations. They have learned from experience that no single national force can, by itself, achieve the objectives of the national democratic revolution."

An important event was the visit to Iraq in June 1971 of a Soviet Party and Government delegation, as a result of which another step forward was made in consolidating friendship and co-operation between the two states. A fundamentally new element was the establishment of contacts between the CPSU and the Baath Party on the common basis of struggle against imperialism and reaction, for social progress.

In November 1971 President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, on behalf of the Iraqi Baath Party, made public the draft of the country's National Charter.

Co-operation between Iraq's national and progressive forces, stated this document, which was offered for a nationwide discussion, was to be based on the principles of intensified struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

According to this draft and on the basis of a previously adopted law a National Assembly was to be convened and a permanent constitution adopted.

The draft recognised the need for solving the Kurd problem on the basis of implementation of all points of the agreement of March 11, 1970, by way of co-operation between the Iraqi Baath Party and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan.

The draft Charter provides for the final liberation of Iraq from foreign dependence. The state sector was proclaimed the basis of the national economy. Special attention in the draft Charter was given to the establishment of a national oil industry and co-operation with the socialist states and other friendly countries.

The draft pointed to the need for carrying out radical reforms in agriculture, the first stage of which was to be a land reform.

The struggle against world imperialism, against the policy of aggression, annexation and racial discrimination, and defence of the nations' right to self-determination—such, under the National Charter, is Iraq's programme of action in the international arena.



At the beginning of December 1971 the leading Iraqi newspapers carried a statement by the Iraqi Communist Party giving an appraisal of the draft Charter of national actions. The Communist Party declared that the draft Charter bore a clearly-expressed anti-imperialist tendency and correctly defined the main national tasks; it drew attention to the clause in the Charter declaring the unacceptability of the capitalist path for Iraq.

The Communist Party drew special attention in this statement to the initiative of the ruling party aimed at establishing a united front of Iraq's progressive parties and patriotic forces.

The Communist Party stressed that in the setting up of a national front there should be no discrimination in regard to one or another of its elements. The national forces and organisations comprising this front should enjoy ideological and organisational independence in the interest of achieving the progressive aims proclaimed in the draft. The Communist Party expressed its agreement with the Charter's conclusion to the effect that any existing contradictions between the progressive forces within Iraq should not overshadow the main contradiction between the progressive forces, on the one hand, and imperialism, Zionism and reaction, on the other.

Between February 10 and 17, 1972, an Iraqi Party and Government delegation led by Saddam Hussein, Deputy General Secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Party and Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of the Republic of Iraq, was in the Soviet Union on an official visit. During the friendly talks and consultations, major matters concerning the present state and future development of Soviet-Iraqi relations and inter-party links, and also urgent international problems, were discussed.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the state of friendly relations between the CPSU and the Baath Party and announced a mutual desire to develop them in the interests of strengthening relations of friendship and co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Iraq, their joint struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for peace, democracy and social progress.

Guided by a mutual desire for further development and strengthening of relations of friendship and comprehensive co-operation between the two countries, it was agreed, taking into account the exchange of views that had taken place, to study what additional measures might be taken in the immediate future to consolidate accordingly the existing relations between the two countries and raise them to a new, higher level in the form of a treaty.

The visit of the Iraqi Party and Government delegation to the USSR was an important new contribution to the development of relations of friendship and comprehensive co-operation between the Soviet Union and Iraq.

The Government of Iraq is giving great attention to creation of a national oil industry. In April 1972, for the first time in the history of Iraq, oil extraction began from state-owned oil wells in North Rumaila, built with Soviet assistance. After the nationalisation of the foreign oil concern, Iraq Petroleum Company, on June 1, 1972, the Iraqi Government had established control over most of the oil produced in the country. Tremendous wealth was transferred to the people of Iraq, including the three largest deposits in the country, from which the IPC in the 47 years of its activities in Iraq had extracted about 800 million tons of oil, six oil pipelines and an oil refinery, and all the plant and property of the IPC. This wealth was transferred to the newly created Iraqi state oil company. The IPC will be paid compensation for its nationalised property, after the deduction of debts and other financial obligations to Iraq. The Revolutionary Command Council warned the IPC that any attempts at sabotage might lead to partial or total rescission of compensation. The co-ordinated actions of Iraq and Syria in nationalising the IPC and its installations is a good object lesson and example of co-operation between progressive Arab countries.

A Soviet Party and Government delegation headed by A. N. Kosygin, Member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, paid a friendly official visit to Iraq from April 6 to 10, 1972, on the invitation of the Baath Party and the Iraqi Government.

Members of the Soviet delegation also visited the



celebrations in Baghdad to mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Baath Party.

During talks and discussions that took place in an atmosphere of friendship, frankness and mutual understanding, questions concerning the development of Soviet-Iraqi relations in various fields were examined. There was also an exchange of views on urgent problems of the current international situation. The two sides expressed the common opinion that successful development of relations between the parties of the two countries is an important means of promoting friendship and co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Iraq.

Moved by their mutual desire to strengthen and establish more firmly the relations of friendship and co-operation between the two governments and peoples and convinced that the further development of such relations is in the interests of the Soviet Union and the Republic of Iraq and serves the cause of promoting universal peace, the two sides decided to conclude a Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation.

The Treaty, which was signed in Baghdad on April 9, 1972, is an important document serving to consolidate the existing level of friendly relations between the two countries and providing a firmer basis for their development. It represents an important contribution to the cause of joint struggle against imperialism, neocolonialism and Zionism, for peace, national independence and social progress.

From September 14 to 19, 1972, Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, General Secretary of the Baath Party and Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, paid an official friendly visit to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union and the Republic of Iraq noted with satisfaction that the friendly relations that have developed between the two countries, based on the fundamental interests of the Soviet and Iraqi peoples, are being built on the firm foundation of respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-interference in one another's internal affairs. It was also noted that the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the two countries provides a firm international legal basis for further deepening of friendship and co-operation between them, and represents an important

contribution to the struggle of the Arab countries against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for the preservation of progressive socio-economic gains. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the development of contacts and links between the CPSU and the Baath Party, and agreed to continue to extend them in breadth and depth.

They also expressed satisfaction over the development of co-operation in the creation and development of a national oil industry, and in overcoming the difficulties caused by pressure from the international oil monopolies. The Soviet side repeated its declaration of support for the just struggle of the Iraqi people to restore its sovereign rights over the country's natural resources, in particular, the decision to nationalise the monopolistic Iraq Petroleum Company.

The two sides announced their readiness to develop economic co-operation, trade, and scientific and cultural links still further.

The Soviet Union and Iraq also agreed on measures to strengthen the defence capability of the Republic of Iraq in order to increase the readiness of its armed forces.

President al-Bakr expressed his profound gratitude to the Soviet Union for its co-operation and all-round support for the Iraqi people in their struggle against imperialism, and Zionism, and to build a new life.

The two sides announced their full support for the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine to restore their legitimate rights. They regard the Palestinian resistance movement as an essential part of the Arab national liberation movement and declare that they will continue to give it material aid and moral support.

All the developments in Iraq have furnished conclusive evidence that a key prerequisite of its successful advance along the path of progressive political and socio-economic reforms is consolidation of the unity of all the national anti-imperialist forces of the Iraqi people, coordination of their actions with a view to the common objectives of developing and finalising the programme of national-democratic reforms.

It is important to recall in this connection the agreement reached in May 1973 between the Baath Party and the Iraqi



Communist Party on co-operation for the purpose of setting up a national-patriotic front in Iraq in accordance with the 1971 National Charter.

The CPSU Central Committee, in a message of congratulations to the leaders of the Baath Party and the Iraqi Communist Party on the occasion of reaching this agreement, described it as an important step towards meeting the Iraqi people's aspirations in the struggle against imperialism, for national liberation and democratic development.

As emphasised in the joint statement of the Baath Party and the Iraqi Communist Party, the development of the revolutionary movement in Iraq and other regions of the Arab world has given conclusive proof that one of the key factors of its success and its strength is realisation of the importance of co-operation and unity between the vanguard forces of the united front. At the same time, the statement said, one of the main causes of the defeats and setbacks for the revolutionary movement was underestimation of this important truism and the prevalence of differences of secondary importance between its forces over the main contradiction between this movement on the one hand and imperialism, Zionism and reaction on the other.

The agreement between the Baath Party and the Iraqi Communist Party, which laid the groundwork for the formation of a progressive national-democratic front is regarded by world democratic opinion as an event of crucial importance not only for Iraq itself but also for the entire national liberation movement of the Arab peoples. It has opened the way to unity with other national anti-imperialist forces of Iraq willing to join it, above all, with the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK).

After signing the agreement, the Baath Party and the Iraqi Communist Party went ahead with their talks and consultations with the DPK on the issue of its participation in the progressive national-patriotic front.

The vital interests of the Iraqi people, the Arabs and the Kurds alike, demand that this issue be settled positively and without delay. In the situation prevailing in Iraq today the attitude to co-operation within the framework of the national-patriotic front has become a key criterion of the progressiveness, consistency and sincerity of the positions

held by the national forces coming forward with a democratic, anti-imperialist programme.

The importance of the measures being taken in Iraq to strengthen national unity on a progressive foundation is increasingly clear in the light of the general situation prevailing in the Middle East today and the actions of the reactionary forces leaning on the support of world imperialism. In this situation, every new step towards unity of the progressive patriotic forces in Iraq and other countries of the Arab East is yet another rebuff to the intrigues of imperialism and reaction.

#### AN ATTEMPT TO ARREST THE MARCH OF ARAB HISTORY

The victories won by the Arab national liberation movement and the establishment of progressive regimes in the Arab world are irrefutable evidence of the deepened social content of that movement, of the extent to which its national and political objectives are interwoven with the economic and social problems, which are of an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist character. These victories have been won on account of the specific conditions of our age, a distinctive feature of which is the transition from capitalism to socialism. They have been won because there existed a world socialist system, which had become an encouraging and inspiring example to all sections of the working people. They have been won because of the struggle of the working class and its Communist and Workers' Parties. They are also a result of the failure to solve the problems confronting the developing countries by way of the capitalist path of development. It should be stressed that these victories have been won under conditions of peaceful coexistence between the two systems.

The progressive social and political regimes in Egypt, Syria and other countries, and their choice of a socialist path of development have made these regimes the allies of the socialist countries, notably of the USSR, and strengthened the political, economic and cultural ties between them. This has rendered still greater and wider aid to the Arab national liberation movement. On the other hand, it has enhanced



the role which this movement, as part of the world national liberation movement, plays in the world revolutionary process. It has also made the Arab national liberation movement a more effective element in the common struggle against colonialism and imperialism, in the struggle for peace; it has increased its contribution to the cause of resolving the contradictions of the contemporary world, the contradictions between capitalism and socialism, in favour of socialism. "The ideas of the great Lenin have drawn people closer together and made it possible for them to exchange views and draw on each other's experience. We are now following in your wake," declared Afif al-Raui, Deputy Minister for Agrarian Reform in Iraq, at the Third Congress of Soviet Collective Farmers in November 1969.

The transition to socialism is a complex process, which in different countries develops unevenly, is at different stages of social maturity and manifests itself in different forms.

This process in the former colonies and dependent countries, as Lenin foresaw, embraces a number of national liberation, democratic and revolutionary movements, which, channeled initially towards national liberation, inevitably militate against capitalism.

Historical experience shows that socialist revolutions do not arise isolatedly from the national liberation movements but on the basis of their development in breadth and depth in the interests and with the participation of the broad masses, on the basis of a radical solution of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal problems. This requirement is inseparably bound up with an understanding of the need for developing the revolution through definite stages, an understanding of the danger of skipping revolutionary stages.

The moral and material support of the world socialist system not only helps the peoples to win and consolidate their political and economic independence, but tends to a considerable extent to speed up the pace of their historical development. This is clearly borne out by the experience of Egypt, Algeria, Syria and other Arab countries.

Starting as national liberation revolutions, the Egyptian and Algerian and some other Arab revolutions found themselves after a few years, and sometimes even months, facing the need for choosing a path for society's further development.

The non-capitalist path of development was not imposed upon the Arab peoples from outside or from above. It was conditioned by a complexus of economic, social, political and national problems that confronted the Arab countries, by the struggle of the broad working masses for a better life.

The non-capitalist path means dealing a powerful blow to the remnants of feudalism and to big and partially medium capital, and carrying out profound socio-economic reforms, which, given the necessary subjective and objective conditions, could serve as a basis for the Arab countries' transition to socialism in accordance with the general laws of development of human society.

The development of the revolutions in the leading Arab countries bears witness to the fact that the non-capitalist path is not a straight road devoid of zigzags and turns. The complexity of the non-capitalist path of transition to socialism is due first of all to the socio-economic conditions, to the undeveloped state of the productive forces, to the intricate pattern of interwoven economic systems and types of production relations, to the still strong positions held by the oil and other imperialist monopolies, to the striving of the capitalist world to keep the Arab countries within their orbit, to the undeveloped state of democratic institutions, to the illiteracy of the bulk of the population, to the great influence of religious and nationalist ideologies, and to the survivals of patriarchal relationships.

A feature of the situation in the principal Arab country—the Arab Republic of Egypt—is that the transition to the non-capitalist path of development is taking place there without direct leadership on the part of the working class and its political party, inasmuch as the class and political consciousness of the Egyptian proletariat is, for various reasons, still insufficiently developed.

In the course of the struggle to consolidate its political power and win complete independence for the country the revolutionary leadership of Egypt succeeded in depriving the reactionary classes of initiative and political organisation, putting an end to their supremacy in the major and higher branches of the state machinery, and, with the backing of the working masses, enforcing the revolutionary laws of 1961-1964.



The revolutionary intellectuals, including those in the army, who were closely linked with the intermediate and middle strata and enjoyed the support of the working masses, were the leading force which carried out the anti-capitalist reforms in the Arab countries.

As the Arab revolutions developed in breadth and depth the contradictions between them and imperialism and internal reaction sharpened; with social and economic issues brought to the fore and illusions concerning the capacity of the bourgeoisie to deal with them shattered, there was a growing desire among definite sections of the revolutionary intellectuals to study the experience of the countries of the world socialist system. At first only separate propositions in the theory and practice of the Communist Parties of the socialist countries were accepted and attempts were made to apply them to the concrete conditions of Arab society.

The frequent references to the ideas of scientific socialism in the programmatic documents of the Arab revolutionary democrats—even if these references sometimes are of a general nature—are a fact of profound significance. They bear evidence to the fact that the logic of the struggle for the people's interests leads to acceptance of the idea of scientific socialism.

Another thing to be noted is that the political organisations of the Arab revolutionary democrats did not shut themselves up in the shell of their national and inter-Arab problems. They came out in support of the struggle of all the peoples against imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism, strongly denounced United States aggression in Vietnam, and declared their desire to co-operate with other revolutionary forces in the struggle for peace, national liberation and social progress. They established contacts with a number of Communist and Workers' Parties, first and foremost with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Arab national democratic parties and organisations declare that they have learned many useful things from the vast experience of the CPSU in the field of socialist construction and from their acquaintance with the activities of other Communist and Workers' Parties.

During 1966-1967, meetings and seminars of representatives of socialist currents in the Arab countries and countries

of Africa were held in Cairo and Algiers at which useful friendly discussions took place between the Arab Communists and revolutionary democrats. The importance of all this for the development of the Arab national liberation movement was very great. By 1967 a broad anti-imperialist front was formed in the Middle East based on the progressive forces of Egypt, Syria and Algeria.

It should be specially mentioned that the general line of the international communist movement—the struggle for peace, democracy, national independence and socialism—is actively supported by the leading parties and organisations of the chief Arab countries—the Arab Socialist Union of Egypt, the National Liberation Front of Algeria, and the Baath Parties of Syria and Iraq. In the consolidation of unity and co-operation between the two major revolutionary forces—the world system of socialism and the national liberation movement—the revolutionary democrats see the earnest of further successes and victories for the Arab revolutions.

At the same time the foreign policy and internal social and economic reforms of the progressive Arab states aroused fury and hatred on the part of imperialism and reaction.

"In its struggle against the national liberation movement," says the Document of the Moscow Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (June 1969), "imperialism stubbornly defends the remnants of the colonial system, on the one hand, and, on the other, uses methods of neocolonialism in an effort to prevent the economic and social advance of developing states, of countries which have won national sovereignty. To this end it supports reactionary circles, retards the abolition of the most backward social structures and tries to obstruct progress along the road to socialism or along the road of progressive non-capitalist development, which can open the way to socialism."

Imperialism refuses to quit the historical stage of its own free will. It attempts to hit out at the various detachments of world socialism and the national liberation struggle. This is borne out by the events of June 1967 in the Middle East, where the Israeli servants of the Western imperialists, egged on by their masters, attacked Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries.



Obviously, Israel's rulers, acting on their own, would never have dared to defy world public opinion by flouting international law. Who, then, stands behind Israel, who inspires and finances the aggressive actions of the Israeli extremists?

From the very inception of the State of Israel the most reactionary forces of imperialism have been set on using it as a strong-point to protect the interests of the oil monopolies and to suppress the national liberation movement in this area of the world.

There is hardly a country in the world of similar or even larger size which can boast receiving such lavish financial service from the imperialist powers. The total sum of state aid, private investments and various donations to Israel by these states on the eve of the June 1967 aggression amounted to over 7,000 million dollars, of which 3,600 million came from the USA and 2,400 million from the FRG. About one-third of all funds received by Israel from abroad consisted of various donations and collections by international Zionist organisations.

Zionist organisations do not confine themselves to direct aid to Israel. Many Zionists are big financial magnates who often hold high government posts and exercise a direct influence on their governments in prosecuting a pro-Israeli policy in the international arena.

As a matter of fact the real cause of the Israeli aggression of June 1967 was the desire of the American and British imperialists to halt the movement of the Arab peoples along the road of socialist progress. The efforts of imperialist propaganda to present this aggression as the result merely of national enmity between Israel and the Arab countries were designed to conceal its real causes, to obscure the class meaning of those events. The war, in effect, was a confrontation between the forces of imperialism and those of national independence, democracy and social progress. It was an attempt at revanche on the part of the Western monopolies undertaken, if not to recover lost domination, at least to arrest the process of socio-economic reforms that is taking place in Egypt and other Arab countries. Ibrahim Makhous, a former leader of the Syrian Baath Party, stated: "The fact that we have decided to lean on the organised masses,

on the alliance between the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie led by a progressive party, on the unity of all progressive forces within the country; that we have embarked upon the road of socialism and have aligned ourselves with all progressive Arab forces and organisations, with all anti-imperialist sections of the population; that we regard our people's struggle for a united Arab socialist motherland as part and parcel of the struggle of all the peoples of the Third World; the fact that we entertain a feeling of deep and loyal friendship towards all the socialist countries headed by the Soviet Union—all this aroused the rage and fury of imperialism. After the failure of the internal conspiracies aimed at overthrowing our progressive regimes imperialism ventured a direct attack on our country and once again resorted to the aid of its tool—Israel."

In 1966 and especially at the beginning of 1967 the Israeli extremists created tension in their relationships with the Arab countries, committed ceaseless acts of provocation on the frontiers, now with one, now with another Arab country.

The UN Security Council on November 25, 1966 censured the Government of Israel for its aggression against Jordan, or for what it called "wide-scale military action".

In April 1967 the Israeli imperialists attacked the Syrian Arab Republic, using aircraft, tanks and artillery. Israel followed this up with further armed provocations on the frontier with Jordan. A number of peace-loving states once more warned the Government of Israel of its responsibility for the consequences of the policy it was pursuing. The Prime Minister of Israel, however, let it be known that the April armed attack on Syria was not the last step and that Israel would choose its own methods and time for similar actions in the future.

The Israeli Knesset (parliament) on May 9 gave the government a free hand to prosecute an aggressive policy. Israeli troops began to concentrate on the Syrian border and mobilisation was carried out.

Alarming reports were received during those days that Israel was planning a strike against Syria at the end of May or beginning of June and then carrying military operations



into Egyptian territory. During the friendly visit of the UAR parliamentary delegation to the Soviet Union in April 1967 the two sides expressed concern at the increased international tension caused by the aggressive actions of imperialism and stressed the urgent need for strengthening unity among all anti-imperialist and anti-colonial forces. As regards the USSR, it fully sympathised with the striving towards unity on the part of the Arab countries and all progressive forces in the Middle East in order to foil the schemes of imperialism and reaction.

The Soviet Government shortly issued a special statement concerning the situation in the Middle East in which it declared that the Soviet Union "was doing and would continue to do everything in its power to prevent a breach of the peace and security in the Middle East and protect the lawful rights of the peoples".

Tension in the Middle East caused concern among all progressive forces, first and foremost among the Communist Parties of the Arab countries. In a Statement Concerning the Situation in the Arab Countries the May 1967 meeting of representatives of Communist Parties of the Arab countries stressed the fact that imperialism was using Israel in the struggle against the national liberation movement and was supplying it with everything necessary for the purposes of aggression. Imperialism's activity in the Middle East, this document said, was conditioned by the present-day situation in the Arab world characterised by the mounting struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism, by the deepening content of the national liberation movement. In regard to the liberated countries such as Egypt, Syria and Algeria, where profound socio-economic reforms had been carried out, the Communists and other progressive forces, said the Statement, set themselves the task of defending, strengthening and widening these gains, of fulfilling all the necessary political and social conditions for these countries' advance along the road of socialism.

The Communist Parties of the Arab countries appealed to all patriotic, progressive and revolutionary forces in all countries to rally in serried ranks against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for the complete liberation of the Arab world, for progress and the liquidation of backwardness in all

spheres of political, economic and cultural life, for the happy future of their peoples, for the realisation of Arab unity on a democratic basis.

The interests of liberation and progress, the Statement emphasised, demanded the further extension and consolidation of the existing co-operation between the Communist Parties and the progressive forces and parties and the establishment of such co-operation in those Arab countries where it did not yet exist.

"The imperialists and reactionaries, in their endeavour to prevent a rallying of the patriotic, progressive and revolutionary forces, raise the banner of anti-communism. Therefore," the Statement continues, "every attempt to split the progressive forces, to create confusion within their ranks, and to ignore the Communist Parties or attack them, serves, as the bitter experience of the past has shown, the interests of the imperialists and reactionaries, causes harm to the national liberation movement and to progress, that is, to the cause of the whole Arab people."

On June 5, 1967, Israel started a war against the United Arab Republic, Syria and Jordan. The Government of Israel flouted the United Nations' Charter and the rules of international law. "The main objective of the war," said the resolutions of the 16th Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel, "was to overthrow the anti-imperialist governments in Egypt and Syria, break the Arab countries' ties with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and safeguard the concessions of the foreign oil monopolies and the strategic bases of the Western colonial powers in our area."

It is characteristic that after the beginning of military operations, at a time when the Soviet Union within hours of the armed conflict strongly denounced the Israeli aggressors, called for universal censure of their treacherous attack, for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of troops to the truce line, some Western powers did everything they could to help Israel win time and make new seizures, to carry out its plans. As a result the Security Council was unable to adopt a decision to meet the emergency.

The Israeli militarists rode roughshod over the decision of the Security Council calling for an immediate ceasefire. On



June 6 the Security Council again called for suspension of all military operations as a first step towards restoring peace. Israel continued to widen operations at the fronts.

On June 7 the Security Council set a date for suspending military operations. Israeli troops continued their aggression.

On June 9 the Security Council once more categorically ordered a ceasefire. Israel ignored the order. The Israeli army launched an offensive against Syria's defensive line with the aim of making a breakthrough to that country's capital—Damascus.

Another, fourth, resolution of the Security Council, the break-off of diplomatic relations with Israel on the part of a number of states, and a strong warning to apply sanctions were needed to make the Israeli troops suspend hostilities. The bulk of Arab territories now occupied by Israel were seized after adoption of the Security Council resolution calling for immediate suspension of hostilities.

The facts incontrovertibly prove that responsibility for starting the war, for the toll it had taken in human lives, and for its consequences lies with Israel.

As a result of the so-called six-day war the Arabs suffered defeat. A large part of Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian territory was occupied. Hundreds of thousands of people left their homes. The Arab peoples suffered tremendous material and moral damage. The annual material losses of the Arabs as a result of Israeli aggression are estimated at over \$500,000,000. Plunder of Arab national resources temporarily seized by Israel yields \$250,000,000 a year to that country.

Aggression against the Arab states in 1967 cost the Tel Aviv adventurists dear too. According to Israel's former Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir, the conduct of military operations alone during the six-day war cost over one thousand million dollars. Maintenance of troops on occupied Arab territories cost Israel in 1969 as much as \$1,200,000 a day. In 1970 it amounted to 3 million dollars. Israel covers most of this expenditure out of moneys received from abroad, from international Zionist organisations.

The appeal of Tel Aviv's rulers to help them create a more secure base in temporarily occupied Arab lands brought an increased inflow of funds. In 1967 they reached a record to-

tal of \$780,000,000. Private and official remittances to Israel and donations collected by Zionist organisations amounted to \$522,000,000 compared with \$292,000,000 in 1966. The USA, FRG and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development agreed to let Israel have another nine thousand million dollars between 1967 and 1975.

Receiving as they do vast funds, the present leaders of Israel are stepping up the country's militarisation year by year. Israel's military expenditure in 1969 was two and a half times as much as it was on the eve of the six-day war. Israel's defence expenditure is the largest in the world for a country of its size and population.

In prosecution of their aggressive policy Israel's rulers are more and more often drawing on the financial sources of international Zionism. Israel's Minister of Defence frankly admitted that for the purpose of its further militarisation Israel counted on the assistance of the international Jewish community, notably that of the USA.

Thus, in furtherance of their aggressive plans, the ties between the most reactionary forces of imperialism and international Zionism are becoming closer and closer.

The imperialists and their Israeli accomplices, however, failed to achieve their main objectives, namely, to overthrow the progressive regimes in the Arab countries, to create a breach in Soviet-Arab friendly relations and weaken the national liberation movement of the Arabs. Naturally, the consequences of Israeli aggression and the difficulties which it has created have left their mark on the internal development of the Arab countries, chiefly Egypt and Syria. The reactionaries became more active. There was increased pressure from without.

Referring to the events of 1967, the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969 pointed out that with the aid of Israeli aggression against Egypt, Syria and Jordan "imperialism, that of the US above all, tried to crush the progressive regimes in the Arab countries, undermine the Arab liberation movement, and preserve or regain its positions in the Middle East. This it has failed to do. Nevertheless, supported by world reaction, including Zionist circles, the ruling forces of Israel continue to ignore the demands of the Arab states and of the peace-



loving peoples, and the UN decisions on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories, persist in their policy of expansion and annexation, and ceaselessly commit fresh armed provocations. This policy is opposed by the Communist Party and other progressive forces of Israel. The Arab peoples resolutely continue the struggle to uphold their freedom, independence and national progress, and to recover the occupied territories, for recognition of the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

"The resistance movement against the occupation is growing, assuming diverse forms, and is enjoying ever greater support. On the side of these peoples are the USSR and other socialist states, the international communist movement, the solidarity of the forces of national liberation, and ever wider public circles in the capitalist countries."<sup>1</sup>

The Arab national liberation movement after the June defeat of 1967 entered a new, fourth, stage since the end of the Second World War. At this new stage the broad masses and the progressive-minded petty bourgeoisie began to realise more and more that the social and political perspectives of the Arab liberation movement envisaged in the programmes of the petty-bourgeois parties and organisations were no longer sufficient under the new conditions that had arisen after the Israeli aggression of 1967. A feature of this new situation was the spontaneous upswing in the people's struggle against American imperialism, for economic and social reforms in the Arab countries, and for stronger ties with the countries of the socialist community, first and foremost with the Soviet Union.

A most important lesson to be drawn from the events of 1967, as Khalid Bagdash, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Syria, pointed out in November of the same year, was recognition "of the need for improving the defence capabilities of the advanced Arab countries. The successful solution of this problem depends upon many factors, military, political and social. If the Soviet Union has been supplying the Arabs with weapons and equipment, the use made of this Soviet aid depends upon us. The extent to which we shall

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 14.*

be assured of the social and political preconditions necessary for strengthening the morale of every progressive national army depends on us too, on the nature of the state power in our countries, on the general political line, on the view taken of the army. The fighting efficiency of the armed forces is inseparably bound up with the task of seriously training the popular masses, above all the workers and peasants, to defend every inch of their native land. Unity between the army and the people, especially in the political and moral sense, is an important guarantee of our peoples being able to stand their ground and win."

The situation that had arisen in the Arab countries after 1967 confronted the Arab Communists, as Khalid Bagdash pointed out, with "two urgent demands. First, to reveal the essence of the State of Israel as being the political, economic and military base of American imperialism in the Middle East. . . . Secondly, the world Zionism has to be shown up as a reactionary movement which serves the interests of world imperialism, and tries to mislead the working masses of the different countries and make them believe that anti-Zionism is synonymous with anti-Semitism. Zionism must be shown up as an ideology and policy in order to free the Jewish working people from its influence and make the working world see the difference between the fight against Zionism, and anti-Semitism."

#### THE VITAL TASKS OF THE ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF TODAY

The Communist and Workers' Parties of the Arab countries are taking an active part in the national liberation movement of their peoples and widely applying Marxist-Leninist theory to the real conditions in the Arab world.

Guided by this theory, the representatives of the Arab Communist Parties in the summer of 1968 issued a special Statement under the heading "Vital Tasks of the Arab Liberation Movement in Eliminating the Consequences of the Imperialist Israeli Aggression".

This Statement was the outcome of an exchange of opin-



ions concerning the general situation in the Arab countries held in July 1968.<sup>1</sup>

Assessing the situation that had arisen in the Arab world following Israel's attack, the Arab Communist Parties held that aggression was continuing and represented a grave menace to world peace and the security of nations, and this made its liquidation imperative.

Reviewing the conditions under which this aggression was committed, its character and motive forces, the Statement says that "the aggression loosened on the Arab countries on June 5 was neither accidental nor isolated. It took place at a time when imperialism mounted a series of direct and indirect attacks on the freedom and independence of many Asian, African and Latin American countries, in the wake of the fascist coup in Greece and the stepped up subversive activities against the socialist countries. The Israeli aggressors and their imperialist masters took advantage of the favourable situation, which they had created in collaboration with pro-imperialist Arab reactionaries by provoking internal conflicts and clashes in some Arab countries. In Yemen, for example, they provided arms and encouraged those trying to overwhelm the republic and restore the monarchy. In Iraq, they endeavoured to complicate the solution of the Kurdish question, advocating a policy of repressions against the Kurds fighting for their legitimate national rights, including autonomy within the framework of the Republic of Iraq. By their projects of an Islam Pact they provoked and intimidated the progressive forces, and intrigued against them by inciting differences between them. Also, they made the most of the shortcomings in the Arab countries, especially those with progressive regimes. . . . The facts show clearly, however, that the aggression was a deliberate act against the Arab national liberation movement, prepared and encouraged by US imperialism with the collaboration of West German and British imperialism."<sup>2</sup>

The Statement stresses the tremendous role of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in preventing the aggres-

sors from accomplishing their ends. A no less important role in helping to preserve the progressive regimes was played by the action of the broad masses against imperialism and Zionism. It was this that barred the way to the forces of reaction, especially in Egypt.

The Statement goes on to say that the defeat revealed a number of shortcomings in the military sphere. The modern armament with which the armies of the progressive Arab countries were supplied was used unskilfully; the standard of military leadership was low; there were dubious and treacherous elements and a lack of co-ordination between the armies. To this Israel put up a well-organised war machine. The Israeli aggressors also turned to account the Arab countries' underestimation of Israel's potentialities.

The defeat also revealed deficiencies and shortcomings in the activities of the progressive regimes in Syria and Egypt and showed that the policy pursued by the governments of some other Arab countries prevented mobilisation of the national forces and utilisation of all potentialities for the conduct of the struggle.

The Statement analysed the defects and mistakes that had a bearing on the outcome of the June war:

"a) The socio-economic measures and deep-going changes were not backed up with appropriate political steps; as a result, the people, above all the working class, who stood to gain the most, were deprived of the opportunity to participate actively in either political leadership or control of production.

"b) Restriction of democratic freedoms, the ban on progressive political organisations, above all the Communist Parties, complicated political and social co-operation between these forces.

"c) The machinery of state inherited from the past was not purged thoroughly enough of extreme reactionary and mercenary elements, and of people belonging to the feudal class or the big capitalists; this complicated and prejudiced many measures, leading to the growth of bureaucracy and corruption and encouraging anti-democratic trends. It also affected military affairs, especially in the United Arab Republic, where plotters hostile to the progressive policy retained important posts. These elements formed the nucleus

<sup>1</sup> See *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, pp. 167-179; *Pravda*, Sept. 26, 1968; *World Marxist Review*, 1968, Vol. II, No. 9, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, p. 168.



of the military bureaucracy that played a disgraceful role, displaying weakness and incompetence, some of them behaving treacherously in the June actions and, after the defeat, organising a reactionary plot against the existing regime.

"d) A guarded attitude still remained with relation to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, who support our national liberation struggle and are the most loyal and sincere friends of the Arabs. Some hesitation was observed in establishing durable and extensive economic, cultural, political and military ties with these countries."<sup>1</sup>

Of the other Arab countries the Statement said:

"a) In the past, Arab countries with reactionary regimes (e.g., Saudi Arabia) had co-ordinated their policy with that of the imperialist states; there was ceaseless plotting against progressive regimes and interference in the affairs of other Arab states, aimed at entangling them in imperialist alliances and plans; this interference sometimes took the form of armed interventions against the national liberation movement (as in the case of Yemen); all this made the countries in question a factor that facilitated both the aggression and the defeat.

"b) The pro-imperialist policy of the rulers of Arab countries not directly dominated by imperialism, the policy of persecuting or restricting the progressive national forces, especially the Communists, prevented them from mobilising their potential and fulfilling their role in the common struggle.

"c) Imperialist hostility towards the progressive regimes and the Arab liberation movement in general, the influence exerted by the imperialists on the rulers of Arab states with reactionary regimes, and the intrigues of world Zionism—this, in the aggregate, was the main reason why the differences between Arab countries were acute, hindering Arab solidarity in the fight against aggression and the aggressors."<sup>2</sup>

"The Israeli rulers and their imperialist masters," the

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, pp. 171-172.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

Statement said, "imagined that military victory would be followed by victory in other areas. But this illusion was short-lived. . . . All the efforts of the Israeli rulers, similar to those of 1948, to effect a forcible emigration of Arab citizens from captured lands and whip up defeatist sentiment, have failed.

"In other parts of the Arab world, the peoples reaffirmed their determination to stand their ground, prevent a new defeat and eliminate the consequences of the aggression. They are agreed that the way to achieve this is for the progressive forces to concert their actions, learn from past experience, and without delay tackle the defects, weaknesses and obstacles revealed during the sneak aggression, creating the conditions necessary for eliminating its consequences."<sup>1</sup>

Certain steps in this direction had been taken, the document noted, but there was a great deal left to do, especially in the various fields of internal life, and above all in the countries with progressive regimes.

Israel's isolation, meanwhile, has increased. Many countries in different continents are changing their attitude towards the Middle East crisis and are giving steadily growing support to the struggle of the Arab nations.

The attitude of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and that of the forces of progress and socialism headed by the Communist Parties, including the Communist Party of Israel, helped to expose the aggressive essence of Israel's role in the international arena. Another contributing factor was the flexible and realistic policy which Egypt began to pursue.

The Statement lays stress on the growing role of the working class and its parties in the Arab world and in each Arab country. In this context, it is pointed out, the struggle of the working class and its parties has enriched the Arab national liberation movement.

Special stress is laid on the fact that "the economic and social achievements and changes attained or under way in some Arab countries, and the events taking place in the world offer the working class, its Marxist-Leninist parties and its other organisations extensive opportunities for participat-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.



ing in resolving the Arab problems, extending the scope of the progressive social measures, and leading their countries forward to socialism. This will broaden and consolidate the role of the other progressive strata."<sup>1</sup>

The representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Arab countries pointed out that to eliminate the consequences of the aggression more active efforts were required on the part of the members of the Arab national liberation movement both on a world and all-Arab scale. They considered it necessary to step up the struggle in the international field "against imperialism and Zionism in all political and economic areas by eliminating imperialism's economic, political and strategic positions, including the dismantling of military bases and withdrawal of the US Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean, by exposing and combating the plans and alliances of neocolonialism. To work for greater solidarity between the Arab national liberation movement and all peoples fighting against colonialism and imperialism, against direct and indirect aggression; to work for greater solidarity with the people of Vietnam fighting for the independence of their country and its territorial integrity."<sup>2</sup>

The Statement stresses the need "to expose the crimes committed by Israel, encouraged by US imperialism, against the civilian population in occupied Arab territory; to expose the aggressive plans still nursed by the Zionist rulers with the object of continuing their expansionist policy at the expense of the Arab states; to appeal to democratic world opinion in order to strengthen the solidarity with the Arab peoples and compel Israel and its masters to retreat and fulfil the UN resolution calling for the withdrawal of troops from territories occupied as a result of the June 5 aggression."<sup>3</sup>

The meeting went on record to reinvigorate to a maximum "political, economic, cultural and military relations with the Soviet Union... [and]... the other socialist states which have at all times stood firmly by the Arab peoples and,

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

especially, during times of trial; to recognise the friendly German Democratic Republic, which supports the just Arab cause and plays an important role in the fight for lasting peace and security in Europe and the rest of the world, against the revival of the nazi peril; to strengthen ties with the world's democratic and peace-seeking organisations, above all with the Communist Parties..."<sup>1</sup>

The Statement points to the need for countering the ideological offensive of neocolonialism and its reactionary allies, which use the mass media and cultural organisations to smear the progressive regimes and progressive national forces, to distort their policy and lower their prestige, and falsify the history, culture and cultural heritage of the Arab nations.

The Statement calls upon the Arab peoples to secure the ban of imperialist cultural organisations and make education and information serve the interest of national liberation. Using every effort to combat the ideological offensive of imperialism under conditions of continuing Israeli aggression the Arabs should expose the Zionist movement and challenge it from scientific positions, on the basis of co-operation and interaction with all the Communist and Workers' Parties and all progressive forces throughout the world. Israel's wanton imperialist aggression has revealed once more the full extent of the menace which the widespread tentacles of the Zionist movement represent.

"The Zionist movement, as its history shows," says the document, "thrives on chauvinism and racialism, merging thereby with the nazi concepts of racial and national exclusiveness. It strives to divide the labour movement and separate Jewish workers from workers of other nationalities. It is a part of imperialism and serves as a tool of world imperialism, particularly US imperialism, which directs it both immediately and by means of its ties with Israel against the Arab and world national liberation movement, using it to split the international working-class movement, in subversive provocative actions, and for espionage against the socialist countries."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.



The July meeting stressed that it was important, on an all-Arab scale and within each of the Arab countries, "to help the masses of the people, particularly the workers, to play their part in the struggle, to lift all restrictions on the democratic and trade-union rights of the people; to afford all national and progressive forces, without discrimination, the opportunity to pursue political and organisational activities in rallying the people and guiding them in eliminating the consequences of the aggression. . . . The prime task facing all national and progressive forces, not just the Communists, is to counteract imperialist and reactionary efforts to carry on the anti-communist policy, the policy of discrediting and slandering the main and the stoutest contingent of the Arab national liberation movement."<sup>1</sup>

This calls for a resolute fight to end the policy of persecutions and arrests of Communists and representatives of other national and progressive forces in Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and other countries, and for the release of imprisoned patriots and progressive public men, including Communists, to enable them to take part with their peoples in the struggle against imperialism, Israel and reaction.

The meeting declared in this connection that "freedom of action by Communist Parties is essential to strengthen the anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist movement and assure the removal of obstacles to progress.

"It calls for ending the policy of suspicion and hostility towards communist and progressive forces in the countries with progressive regimes, ending the policy of keeping the Communists and progressive forces out of the national fronts and out of political activity, ending the policy of persecution and ideological quarantine.

"This will create favourable conditions for co-operation by all national and progressive forces, for rallying all forces with a stake in national independence and social progress in each Arab country and in the Arab world as a whole.

"The alliance of national and progressive forces is objectively based on the coinciding interests of the classes and social strata from which they come in carrying out the tasks of the national democratic revolution, that is, in actions aimed at

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, p. 176.

completing radical reforms, particularly agrarian reform in the interest of the poor and middle peasants, with the latter's support and participation."<sup>1</sup>

The meeting also urged support for all that had been done "in the UAR and Syria to purge the machinery of state of reactionary and corrupt elements, and work for deepening and expediting this process; to remove members of the reactionary classes, saboteurs and bribe-takers in these two countries and Algeria from posts of leadership in the nationalised enterprises and enterprises of the state sector, who should be replaced by progressives concerned about the growth of these enterprises and their effective contribution to the development of the national economy. The trade unions should be afforded the opportunity to control these enterprises. It is equally essential to modernise and improve legislation, repealing all regulations that impede the free development of national and progressive forces or obstruct progressive political, economic and social growth."<sup>2</sup>

The Statement says: "Arab Communist and Workers' Parties which have always taken guidance in their policy and practical work in the supreme interests of their respective countries, will continue to act in unison in organising bilateral and multilateral meetings with other political, national and progressive forces and organisations to hammer out agreement on the key problems facing our peoples."<sup>3</sup>

The representatives of the Arab Communist and Workers' Parties consider it their duty "to combat all conservative and reactionary trends obstructing the progressive regimes in their economic work and rejecting their economic and social gains. The process of building strengthens the progressive regimes, adding to their political, economic and military might in frustrating the designs of world imperialism and Israel. It is essential therefore, more firmly and extensively, to rely on the class forces chiefly interested in revolution, particularly the working class, the peasant masses and the revolutionary intelligentsia."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.



The meeting urged continued struggle "against the reactionary and dictatorial regimes in the Arab world, for the establishment of democratic, national forms of government opposed to imperialism, reaction and Zionism."<sup>1</sup>

The next meeting of Arab Communist Parties was held in January 1971. In the course of the meeting opinions were exchanged between the fraternal Communist Parties on the major problems of the day in the Arab world. Representatives of the Communist Parties of Jordan, Syria, Iraq and the Lebanon came to the conclusion that the consolidation and successful development of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 was steadily tipping the balance of forces in the world in favour of the forces of freedom and socialism, against imperialism and aggression, and was a great achievement of the world revolutionary movement, including that of the Arabs.

In their struggle against continuing aggression and in their movement aimed at exposing Israeli expansionist policy, which is supported by American imperialism, the Arab peoples have achieved notable successes in the international sphere. The international public at large have taken a stand in support of the Arabs' just struggle. Israel's isolation is steadily increasing. The key role in this was played by the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries, by the fraternal Communist Parties and the progressive and revolutionary forces in the world of today.

Recently the forces of freedom throughout the world have achieved important successes in the fight against imperialism. In Indochina the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are dealing blows at American imperialism. The liberation movement against US domination and aggression and the puppet regimes is continuing to grow in Latin America.

The liberative anti-imperialist struggle is mounting also on the African continent. A number of African peoples have achieved important successes in defeating the plots of neocolonialism: the peoples of Nigeria have liquidated the separatist movement in Biafra; the people of Guinea have successfully repulsed foreign intervention.

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Waqt*, Sept. 1968, p. 178.

At the same time the Arab national liberation movement is exposed to the attacks of imperialism, which is out to strike a blow at the progressive regimes in the Arab countries, to foment conflicts and splits in the anti-imperialist movement of the Arabs, to put an end to the Palestinian resistance, undermine Arab-Soviet friendship and check the rate of economic progress and social reforms in this area of the globe.

The January 1971 meeting of Arab Communist Parties stressed that imperialism, especially that of the USA, was practising methods of pressure and plots against the Arab liberation movement, was encouraging Israel in its aggressive and expansionist policy and was mobilising Arab reactionary forces for achieving ends which the June 1967 aggression had failed to achieve.

The Arab national liberation movement, despite serious mistakes and displays of Right-wing tendencies in some of the countries with progressive regimes and definite internal difficulties, was able to hold its own against imperialist-Zionist pressure and achieve important successes.

The progressive regimes in Egypt and Syria made considerable economic and social progress. Among their major successes were the completion of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt and the continuation of work on the Euphrates dam.

The progressive regimes have consolidated their positions and expanded geographically as a result of the victory of the Sudan revolution, the overthrow of the royal regime in Libya, and the progressive developments in the Southern Yemen.

Important reforms have been carried out in the Egyptian army, as a result of which its defensive capacity and armament have increased. The defensive power of the Syrian army, too, has increased as a result of the effective aid given by the Soviet Union.

Multilateral co-operation is developing among Arab progressive regimes: military co-operation has increased between Egypt and Syria and the establishment of a Federation of Arab Republics has been proclaimed, which is an important step towards unity.

Friendly and allied ties are growing between the Arab



countries and the USSR, which is rendering important assistance to the Arab peoples in their struggle against the bloc of imperialism and Zionism, for liberation of the seized Arab territories and economic independence.

The Palestinian resistance movement has become an important detachment of the Arab national liberation movement and a part of the world revolutionary process. It expresses the striving of the Palestinian people to win their lawful national rights, namely, to return to their homeland and decide their own destinies.

The declaration of the Arab Communist Parties states that the successes of the Arab national liberation movement infuriate imperialism and Zionism and drive them on more and more to acts of subversion against the progressive regimes in the Arab countries and the Palestinian resistance. In doing so they make use of all the blunders and differences in the Arab national liberation movement and within each of its contingents in order to deepen the rift and cause a split and fragmentation of their ranks and thus make it easier to assail them.

The measures taken by Jordanian reaction in organising massacres of the Palestinian resistance, of Jordan's national forces, notably the events of September 1970, are criminal activities on the part of the reactionary forces, which fit in with the designs of the imperialist-Zionist bloc.

The struggle of the Palestinian resistance is a just and lawful struggle, which has won the support of the world's forces of progress and socialism and of world public opinion.

The main feature of this movement is its militant spirit, firm will and determination to rid the Arab lands of the invaders. It has arisen in various districts, especially in the Gaza area, as a result of the campaign of terror and punitive expeditions which the Zionist rulers have launched against Arab citizens on temporarily occupied territories.

The Palestinian people cannot be destroyed. Their struggle for return to their homeland and self-determination is a just struggle. It is the duty of Communists and all progressive national forces to not only give their support to that struggle, but to take part in it.

The participants of the 1971 meeting declared that the Communist Parties of the Arab countries would intensify their efforts and take a greater part in the struggle of the Palestinian resistance, that "Communists consider the cause of the Arab Palestinian people to be their own cause and the cause of all progressive nationalists, and that they will fight for its victory shoulder to shoulder with the Palestinian people. In this they will have the support of the forces of freedom and socialism throughout the world, in the van of which stands the USSR."

The USA is rendering Israel enormous financial aid, is supplying its army with the most up-to-date arms and military personnel. The United States' support of the Zionist rulers enabled them to ignore the November 1967 resolution of the Security Council.

Israel, by its aggressive expansionist policy, continues to be a threat to peace in this region of the world. To eliminate the consequences of aggression and secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Arab territory the Arab Communists consider it necessary:

to improve the fighting efficiency of the Arab armies by raising the level of their military training, patriotism and political consciousness, by mastering modern methods of conducting war and strengthening military co-operation with the USSR;

to create on the frontiers with Israel not only an Egyptian (southern) front, but an eastern front to meet the requirements of the struggle to force Israel to withdraw its troops from the territories it has seized, the struggle against aggressive acts on its part;

to step up the activity of the Palestinian resistance on Israeli-occupied territory, to unite the resistance organisations into a single front with a single programme, to strengthen the ties between the resistance and the Arab national liberation movement and progressive organisations, to unite the two fraternal peoples of Palestine and Jordan, and set up a united national government, which would mobilise the country for repulsing the aggressors;

to increase the economic power of the progressive Arab countries in the fields of industry, agriculture and the development of the natural resources; at the same time it is



necessary to develop and broaden progressive social reforms; to strengthen co-operation among progressive Arab forces, resolve the differences between them in order to rally the broad masses to the struggle against the chief enemy—the bloc of imperialism, Zionism and reaction; for this purpose it is necessary to work on setting up and consolidating the internal front in every Arab country and in the Arab world as a whole.

The representatives of the Arab Communist Parties wound up their declaration by hailing “the tremendous successes of the peoples of the USSR headed by the great party of Lenin in building the material basis of communism, in various spheres of economy, culture, science and space research, which increase the might of the Soviet Union, the great friend of the Arabs.

“The Communist Parties of Jordan, Syria, Iraq and the Lebanon appealed also to all progressive revolutionary forces throughout the world to strengthen solidarity with and support the just struggle of the Arabs against Israeli-imperialist aggression, for liberation of all the aggressor-occupied territories in order that the Palestinian people return to their homeland and determine their own destinies.”

In January 1972 the Third Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party was held in Beirut. The Congress was highly significant for the whole Arab world since it was there that representatives of different units of the Arab national liberation movement met for the first time. Delegations from Egypt's Arab Socialist Union, Syria's ruling Baath Party, Iraq's ruling Baath Party, the executive committee of the Organisation for the Liberation of Palestine, progressive organisations from the Persian Gulf countries, the Communist Parties of Syria, Iraq, Sudan and Jordan, the Moroccan Party of Liberation and Socialism and the Algerian Socialist Vanguard Party were among those attending.

During the Congress the Lebanese Communist Party pointed out the danger and harm of further disagreements between Arab progressive forces and called for a combined struggle against the common foe. The wide participation of representatives of different progressive forces of the Arab countries in the work of the Congress showed how ripe the time is for co-operation between them. It is important that

the first such meeting took place at the Congress of an Arab Communist Party, which clearly showed how isolated anti-Communists of various shades turned out to be. As a result of this Congress, in January 1972 a truly historic document was published, signed by 24 Arab parties and organisations, which called for an all-Arab conference of progressive forces.

The documents of the Third Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party and speeches made there confirmed the correctness of the stand already taken by the Communists, regarding the establishment of progressive regimes as a major achievement of the Arab national liberation movement. At the same time, the Arab Communists condemned all kinds of reformist position, which reject the historical role of the working class in guiding the process of transition to socialism.

Satisfaction was expressed at the Congress over the growth of co-operation and increasing co-ordination and unity of action of the Communist Parties, in particular, those of Syria, Iraq, Jordan and the Lebanon. This is an important step on the way to strengthening the authority and increasing the influence of Communist Parties in the Arab national liberation movement, in isolating Right-wing trends and currents in it, and achieving greater unity between all patriotic forces.

The Arab Communists are currently striving to strengthen and develop their alliance with other progressive forces. They regard this as being of tremendous importance for the future development of the Arab national liberation movement, for promoting socio-economic transformation in the Arab countries and their eventual transition to socialism.

The Arab liberation movement is concerned at this stage with the mobilisation of the popular masses to remove the effects of Israeli aggression and ensure continued economic and social progress. The unity of the progressive forces in each individual country and on the scale of the whole Arab world, their solidarity and co-operation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, guarantee that the Arabs will successfully resolve the national and social tasks that face them.



Highly important in this connection was the All-Arab Congress of Progressive Anti-imperialist Forces held in Beirut at the end of 1972, as well as the Conference of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Arab countries held in the same city in September 1973.

The Conference discussed the situation in the Arab countries and the vital problems facing the Arab liberation movement. Israel's continued imperialist aggression against Arab states was also considered in detail.

The final communiqué of the Conference pointed out the continued struggle waged by the Arab national liberation movement against world imperialism, Zionism and reaction. This is above all the struggle against the Israeli aggression and expansionist policy, for the liberation of the occupied Arab lands, for the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine. This is a struggle for political independence, against reaction, for full economic liberation, against the imperialist monopolies, for dismantling foreign military bases, against hostile propaganda and ideological subversion. For all the difficulties of this struggle, spectacular progressive achievements have been made in most of the Arab states during the past few years.

The communiqué specifically referred to the fact of ending the control the oil monopolies had over a large part of the Arab oil fields in Iraq, Algeria, Syria and Libya. Important steps were taken to develop economic relations with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community with a view to building up an independent national economy.

The struggle for economic and social progress, the communiqué said, requires coordinated actions of all classes and social strata willing to attain this objective, to secure an alliance of the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, the petty bourgeoisie and other population groups plundered by the imperialist monopolies and local capitalists.

The communiqué dealt with the questions involved in the development of political democracy in the Arab countries. In the past few years, the communiqué emphasised, a number of communist and national-patriotic parties were granted legal status. Progressive national fronts were set up in Syria and Iraq. In the Lebanon, progressive parties and organisations are stepping up joint actions in defence of democracy,

the interests of the popular masses and the Palestine resistance movement. In the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, co-operation between the national-democratic forces is also in evidence. Communist Parties participate in the governments of several Arab states and co-operate on a growing scale with other progressive parties and forces in pursuance of common goals. This fact indicates, in particular, a fundamental change in the stand of the progressive patriotic and national forces and their awareness of the danger posed by anti-communist slogans.

The communiqué went on to say that the Arab liberation movement attaches immense importance to co-operation between the liberated Arab countries and the Soviet Union. This is evidenced by the conclusion of the Soviet-Iraqi and the Soviet-Egyptian treaties of friendship and co-operation, which demonstrate the close links between the national-liberation movement and world socialism. Arab-Soviet friendship and co-operation is a major accomplishment in the liberation struggle of the Arab peoples, a guarantee of its further progress. Renunciation of or withdrawal from this alliance by any social force in the Arab countries would be tantamount to a slide to the Right, into the camp of reaction.

The communiqué of the Conference also underscored the importance of the Palestine resistance movement as an active force in the Arab and world-wide liberation struggle, one that represents the Arab people of Palestine and fights for their right to repatriation and self-determination on their native soil.

The positive changes and developments in the Arab liberation movement, the communiqué said, are fiercely opposed by imperialism, Zionism and reaction. This is illustrated by the continued escalation of the Israeli aggression to secure a further expansion by seizure of Arab lands, to liquidate the social and political gains in the progressive Arab states. As a result of intrigues by imperialism, Zionism and reaction, Rightist trends and sentiments are growing in certain Arab countries. A most dangerous weapon used by the imperialists is one of fomenting internal strife within the national forces along with efforts to disseminate anti-communism and anti-Sovietism.



The communiqué paid particular attention to the present international situation and the world communist movement. It stated specifically that the current turn towards the establishment on the world scene of the principles of peaceful co-existence and the rising tide of the anti-imperialist struggle are the result of the increased power of the socialist camp and its vanguard, the Soviet Union, its economic, scientific and cultural achievements, as well as the growth of the world-wide working-class and national liberation movements. The easing of world tensions, the communiqué stressed, provides more favourable conditions for success in the peoples' struggle for independence and for the advance of the developing countries along the path of progressive political and socio-economic reforms.

The Conference outlined a number of urgent tasks facing the Arab liberation movement in the phase of national-democratic revolution.

In their communiqué the Communist and Workers' Parties expressed their full determination to struggle jointly with all patriotic and progressive forces in the Arab countries against the Israeli aggression, to repulse the intrigues of imperialism and reaction directed above all against the progressive regimes in Arab states.

The Communists of the Arab countries are coming out for the establishment of national fronts of progressive forces in individual Arab states and in the Arab world as a whole, for democracy, for consolidating the progressive Arab regimes, for attaining Arab unity on a clear anti-imperialist and progressive foundation.

The Communist and Workers' Parties of the Arab countries deem it their duty to work tirelessly to strengthen the unity and cohesion of the world communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism and the alliance of the national liberation movement with the countries of the socialist community and other progressive forces of the world, to wage a determined fight against Maoism and the subversive activities of the Peking leadership.

The Conference sent a message to the CPSU CC General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, which said in particular: "We highly appreciate your initiatives and the results of your visits to the USA, the FRG and France, which have promoted

an international detente and the easing of tensions in the relations between states with differing social systems. This has created more favourable opportunities for the world-wide and Arab national liberation movement and is a substantial contribution to the policy of peaceful co-existence in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

"The delegates to the Conference equally highly appreciate your firm stand in support of the struggle of the Arab peoples against the Israeli aggression and for eliminating its consequences, in the cause of solidarity with all the peoples fighting for their liberation and social progress, including the Arab people of Palestine struggling for the restoration of their legitimate national rights.

"We avail ourselves of this opportunity to congratulate you cordially on the occasion of your Lenin Peace Prize award for your tireless efforts to strengthen peace throughout the world.

"We wish you good health, many years of life and fruitful work for the benefit of mankind and our common cause of establishing lasting peace and building communism."

The past few years have fully confirmed the correctness of the conclusions drawn by Arab Communists concerning the nature of the present-day stage of the national liberation movement in the Arab world.

After the June 1967 war a new independent Arab state was formed in November of the same year in the south of Arabia—the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, which proclaimed an anti-imperialist programme and ranged itself with the independent Arab countries. The republican regime in the Yemen Arab Republic held out in a hard fight against monarchist elements from without. The May 1969 revolution in the Sudan and the September revolution of the same year in Libya go to prove that despite the activities of counter-revolution and neocolonialism's uninterrupted pressure on the national liberation movement the alignment of forces in favour of socialism there had not changed, and that the barrier of counter-revolution and imperialist encirclement in one or another Arab country can be broken through.



### THE MAY 1969 REVOLUTION IN THE SUDAN

The Second World War had a tremendous impact on the development of the Sudan. The Sudanese, who had taken a direct part in the struggle against fascism (in Ethiopia and Egypt), received a good political schooling. Those years saw the growth in the Sudan of the working class and the bourgeoisie, and a process of disintegration among the peasantry. Britain took strong action to channel the liberative movement in the direction it wanted. Among people who had graduated the various colleges opinion as to the ways of achieving independence for the Sudan and the country's future status became sharply divided. The end of 1945 also saw the formation of political parties, such as the Ashigga Party, the Umma Party and others.

The Ashigga Party expressed chiefly the interests of the national bourgeoisie. The leader of the party was Ismail al-Azhari, professor of mathematics. The party maintained close contacts with the bourgeois and landowner parties of Egypt, while within the country they leaned on the Moslem Hatmiya sect headed by the big landowner Ali al-Mirghani. The party's programme envisaged banishment of the British and unity of the Nile Valley, that is, between the Sudan and Egypt.

The Umma Party expressed the interests of the comprador bourgeoisie, of the tribal chieftains and the feudal-clerical upper crust. The chairmanship of the party was later taken over by Saddiq al-Mahdi, with Abdulla Khalil as General Secretary. The party enjoyed influence among the backward tribes of the western districts of the Central Sudan and leaned on the Moslem Ansari sect, which was headed by Imam Abdel Rahman al-Mahdi, a member of one of the Sudan's biggest families of landowners and entrepreneurs, who were closely connected with British monopoly capital.

The year 1946 saw the foundation of the Sudanese Communist Party. Under its influence the workers of the main railway junction at Atbara organised in 1947 the first trade union with a membership of 20,000. During the strikes of 1948-1949 there were founded trade unions of building workers, printers, auto-drivers, etc. A Trade-Union Federation of the Sudan was organised in 1950 embracing 53

unions with a membership of 150,000. On the initiative of the Communists the first peasant and other organisations were set up, among them the League of Sudanese Women and the Federation of Sudanese Students.

The July 1952 Revolution in Egypt, in abolishing the feudal-monarchist regime, dealt a heavy blow also at the positions of British imperialism in the Sudan. All Sudanese political parties and groups that stood for united action and union with Egypt, amalgamated in December 1952 and formed the National Unionist Party which was led by Ismail al-Azhari, while in 1953 a progressive organisation—the Anti-Imperialist Front—was formed. The colonial authorities stepped up their repressions against the patriots. All their efforts to crush the national liberation movement, however, were in vain. By the middle of the fifties a broad anti-British front was formed in the Sudan embracing nearly all the major national forces of the country who demanded political independence for the Sudan. The British colonialists and imperialist circles in the Sudan thus found themselves in complete isolation and were compelled to acquiesce to the proclamation on January 1, 1956 of the independent Republic of the Sudan.

After the proclamation of independence the liberation movement in the Sudan came up against serious difficulties. These difficulties had their origin not only in the fact that the exploiter classes and their "traditional parties", who held a dominant position in the state, fiercely resisted the striving of the progressive forces to secure deep-going social and economic reforms. Within the progressive camp itself, under the influence of the successes achieved in the struggle against colonialism, a spirit of complacency began to spread. The coalition government of Abdulla Khalil, which came to power in July 1956, rested on the bloc of three parties: the Umma Party, the People's Democratic Party founded the same year following the split in the National Unionist Party, and the Southern Liberal Party. The preponderance of the Umma Party in the government predetermined its pro-imperialist policy. As a result there was a strengthening of the Right forces. The administrative apparatus created by the colonial authorities was preserved practically intact. The leadership of the Right parties made wide use of the state



power primarily in the interest of the propertied classes. These ends were served by the social and economic measures of all three Sudanese governments during 1956-1958. Dissatisfaction with the policy of the ruling circles grew among the people. Hopes gave place to profound disillusion. Objective conditions were ripening in the Sudan for the formation of a broad popular patriotic union based on the national interests of the struggle against the imperialist and reactionary forces. Frightened at the prospect of being dismissed from power the leadership of the Umma Party and the Ansari sect made frantic efforts to seek ways of keeping their positions.

Under these circumstances, on November 17, 1958, "an operation was carried out, in form a coup, but at bottom a retention of power". This formulation from the official publication of the Umma Party, *Jihad fi sabil id-dimuqratiya* (Khartoum, 1965, p. 14), is a fairly accurate description of the nature of the military coup carried out by General Abboud.

The Political Bureau of the Sudanese Communist Party, in a statement issued the following day, denounced the military coup as being a reactionary one. It pointed out that there were large national forces in the army and that the coup was not backed by these forces, but by a group of pro-imperialist mercenaries from among the Umma Party. General Abboud dissolved parliament, revoked the constitution, did away with freedom of speech, of assembly and the press, and banned the activities of the political parties. The government threw the door wide open to foreign capital. But not even this new government was able to impose upon the Sudan participation in military blocs. This was due to the communist-sponsored mass movement, directed from the underground, in defence of peace, as well as to the alignment of forces in the international arena, which was changing in favour of socialism. Under the pressure of the masses the government of Abboud was compelled even to agree to economic negotiations with the socialist countries. With some of them it signed economic, trade and payment agreements.

The military regime's policy ran counter not only to the interests of the workers and peasants, but to those of the national bourgeoisie. The Sudanese Communist Party at the

time was the only political force confronting the military regime. It began patiently to rally and organise for the struggle all the national progressive forces. By October 1964 there was set up in the Sudan a united front of opposition forces. As a result of the general political strike of October 26-29, 1964, the military regime in the Sudan was overthrown. In the course of the uprising against the dictatorship the bourgeois-landowner monopoly of power was shaken. A new government was formed in which the Communists were represented. At the elections to parliament in April 1965 eleven Communists were returned. Compared with the previous elections the Communists received fifteen times more votes.

The growing influence and prestige of the Sudanese Communists roused the reactionary forces, who launched another offensive against the country's democratic forces. In the summer of 1965 the counter-revolution in the Sudan won a victory, but the popular movement was able by the use of flexible tactics to retreat and hold its basic positions in the mass organisations.

The mass protests of the Sudanese at the end of 1966 against the anti-democratic actions of the government greatly injured the reputation of its head—Saddiq al-Mahdi—and weakened his position. In March 1967 the Supreme Court of the Sudan reaffirmed its decision to the effect that the resolution of the Constituent Assembly dissolving the Communist Party was unconstitutional. The government of Saddiq al-Mahdi again refused to abide by this ruling. The national liberation forces developed a still more active struggle for democratic freedoms, against attempts to impose a reactionary constitution, against Right bourgeois reformism, which was out to emasculate the watchwords of the Sudanese revolution of 1964 of their social content. The popular movement continued to grow.

Political developments in the Sudan after the June 1967 war were marked by growing demands on the part of the masses and the progressive democratic organisations and parties for unity of all the country's forces to enable it to make an effective contribution to the struggle of all the Arab peoples and all the world's peace-loving forces against the imperialist policy of aggression and war.



The Fourth Congress of the Sudanese Communist Party, held in October 1967, was of tremendous significance in the life of the country and the activities of the Sudan's progressive democratic forces. The Congress stated that the main aim of neocolonialism's policy in regard to the Sudan was to prevent the country from following up the national democratic revolution and make it take the capitalist path of development.

November 1967 saw the establishment in the Sudan of a Socialist Republic Party, whose aim was to fight "for the development of the Sudan on a socialist basis". Its Rules stated that the Party strove by democratic methods to achieve unity among the working people.

In December 1967 the People's Democratic Party and the National Unionist Party amalgamated into the Democratic Unionist Party. Ismail al-Azhari, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Sudan, became chairman of the Party. The new party proclaimed its aim to be the achievement of bourgeois-democratic reform in the Sudan.

The Communist Party in April and May 1968 did a big job in connection with the new elections to the Constituent Assembly. These were the fourth elections in the country's history. The Communist Party, the Socialist Republic Party, the Southern Democratic Party, the Federation of Sudanese Workers' Unions and the Peasants' Union, and a number of progressive independents came out in a united front by setting up a Union of Socialist Forces. The Union's Charter, proclaimed in April 1968, stated that elections could not resolve the political crisis in the Sudan since independence in the hands of the traditional parties had become a fiction. These parties, the Charter said, had handed the reins of government over to people who used the power in their own private interests, kept the nation in a state of backwardness and helped the spread of foreign influence in the Sudan. A way out of the political crisis was possible along the lines of non-capitalist development and a sustained struggle against imperialism.

In the course of the elections to parliament candidates of the Union of Socialist Forces—General Secretary of the Communist Party Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub and representatives of the Federation of Workers' Unions—were returned.

The candidates of the extreme Right-wing parties suffered a defeat at the elections.

On May 27, 1968, parliament elected a head of the Sudanese Government. Muhammed Ahmed Mahgoub again became Prime Minister. The government, made up of members of the Imam wing in the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party, continued the policy of its predecessors. It showed considerably more concern for its own private interests than for the interests of the people. Ministers dipped their hands into the public coffers, disregarding the country's acute needs. The internal debt rose from £\$4,000,000 in 1966 to £\$46,000,000 in 1969. The country's economic condition deteriorated and unemployment increased. At the same time the profound contradictions within the ruling bloc remained, despite the amalgamation of the two rival factions of the Umma Party in April 1968. All this caused dissatisfaction with the existing regime among the working people, who strove towards political and economic reforms. The government, on the other hand, resembled a ship without a compass. Its policy, pursued in the interests of the comprador bourgeoisie, the tribal chiefs, the owners of large landed estates and higher officials of the corrupt bureaucracy, found no support among the democratic parties, the trade unions or the army officers. Under these conditions, on May 25, 1969, power in the Sudan was seized by a group of officers belonging to the Front of Free Officers. A Revolutionary Command Council was formed headed by Colonel Jaafar Mohammed al-Nemeiry.

Thanks to the support of the working people the May 1969 revolution soon grew into a national anti-imperialist revolution. Along with national patriotic elements Sudanese Communists were represented in the new government. The representatives of the North and South declared their full support for the government.

The May revolution brought to power in the Sudan anti-imperialist revolutionary democratic forces which stood for the country's independent development.

The former regimes left behind a burdensome heritage. Industry was yielding approximately 3 per cent of the national income. Practically half the gross national product was produced in the "traditional sector" in which the natural



economy predominated and in which three quarters of the population were engaged. Cotton accounted for nearly two-thirds of the revenue from Sudanese exports. Over 90 per cent of the adult population were illiterate. Foreign capital held key positions in the country's economy.

One of the country's most acute problems was that of the South. Sudan's southern provinces, inhabited by Nilotic African Negroid tribes comprising almost a third of the country's population, as a result of the separatist movement provoked by imperialist circles and of the chauvinist policy of former regimes, had been practically isolated from the rest of the country in the course of many years. This led to a state of chronic stagnation in the economy of the South. Punitive operations in the South since 1956 cost the Sudan's economy £S156,000,000. Thousands of Sudanese were killed and crippled; 120,000 southern Sudanese lived abroad, where they became an object of political intrigues on the part of imperialist agents.

Sudan's new leaders declared their intention of following the road of socio-economic reforms. Their programme envisaged a struggle against imperialism and internal reaction, consolidation of the state sector in industry and agriculture, and stimulation of national capital.

The first policy-making statement of the revolutionary government declared the intention to place power in the hands of those who are really concerned in securing the interests of the country—the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary intellectuals and national capitalists unassociated with imperialism.

The government declared that it envisaged the establishment of state control over foreign investments, and measures to overcome social, economic and cultural backwardness inherited from the colonial and reactionary regimes.

Of great socio-political importance was the new government's programme for doing away in a number of districts with the system of so-called closed districts introduced by the English, under which all power in the rural areas was wielded by the tribal chiefs, who were the mainstay of the neocolonialists and the local reaction.

In June 1969 it was officially announced that regional autonomy was granted the South within the framework of a

united Sudan. A number of measures were then undertaken to weed out reactionary and venal elements from the machinery of state, to do away with corruption, wastage and prodigal spending of state funds, and to reorganise the bureaucratic apparatus of administration in Gezira, the country's chief agricultural region.

First steps were taken also to speed up economic development, abolish obsolete relations of production, carry out agrarian reform, promote the co-operative movement, fight the drought, irrigate pasture lands and steadily enhance the role and improve the welfare of the working class, the peasantry and the intellectuals.

In May 1970 all seven foreign banks operating in the Sudan were nationalised. In June the property of the Bitar Company, which had a virtual monopoly of the export trade in gum arabic, was confiscated along with that of 17 other export and import companies, 13 foreign firms and 10 foreign businessmen. In addition, the state nationalised 10 foreign companies, which evaded tax payments, secretly transferred their funds abroad, and maintained contacts with imperialist and Zionist circles. Laws were also passed introducing a state monopoly on the marketing of cotton and establishing a state company for the import and distribution of motion pictures.

July 1 saw the launching in the Sudan of a five-year programme covering the 1970/71-1974/75 fiscal years. Capital investments were planned at £S385,000,000, which were to ensure an annual growth of 7.6 per cent in the national income. State investments under the plan are to amount to about £S210,000,000, which will bring the state sector to the lead in the economy. The plan provides for the construction of 20 industrial enterprises, the expansion of the area of irrigated lands by 726,000 feddans, etc. Per capita income is to increase from £S36 to £S47, that is, by 34 per cent.

In August the Revolutionary Council nationalised all privately owned newspapers and information agencies, which had been set up by the English to propagandise the ideas of British colonialism and defend the interests of the exploiter minority.

Simultaneously the new leadership of the Democratic



Republic of the Sudan declared its intention to strengthen friendly relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and with the fraternal Arab states. The Democratic Republic of the Sudan was one of the first Arab countries to recognise and establish diplomatic relations with the GDR, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Korean People's Democratic Republic and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

The efforts of the Sudan's progressive forces to solve the problems of the national-democratic revolution took place in a complex situation. Reaction made every effort to undermine the positions of the progressive national regime and split the ranks of its supporters. Reactionary circles in the Sudan and in some other Arab countries, staking on winning over nationalist elements, tried to work up anti-communist feeling and denigrate the policy of the Sudan's national democrats.

Realising that open attacks upon the socialist strivings of the Sudanese people would be of no avail, the reactionaries declared themselves adherents of "socialism without the Communists".

Reaction's disruptive activities within the Sudan were accompanied by the intrigues of imperialism and Zionism from without, as has become usual in such situations.

By the end of March 1970 as many as nine attempts at a counter-revolutionary coup in the Sudan were disclosed and foiled. A dangerous attempt to overthrow the revolutionary regime was undertaken in March 1970, when an armed revolt broke out centred on Abba Island in the White Nile—the private feudal preserve of the leaders of the Ansari sect and the Umma Party.

All the country's progressive forces presented a united front to the menace that threatened the May revolution. An important role in rallying the masses for the fight against reaction during those anxious days when the fate of the republic hung in the balance was played by the Communist Party, the progressive trade unions, and the peasants', youth, women's and other democratic organisations. With their support the Sudanese army, taking strong action, suppressed the revolt, which was backed by imperialist circles.

The March events showed how vitally important and

effective was united action by all anti-imperialist, patriotic forces both within the country and in the international arena.

After the May revolution in the Sudan and the September 1969 revolution in Libya these countries started to co-operate closely with Egypt in internal and foreign policies. In particular, they launched several joint economic projects, and on November 8, 1970 the three countries reached an agreement for the setting up of a Federation of Arab Republics. In signing the agreement for the proposed federation the Egyptian, Sudanese and Libyan leaders were guided by the fact that the revolution in their countries aimed at achieving common ends, namely, freedom, socialism and unity, which were the principal demand of the broad Arab masses.

The leaders of Egypt, the Sudan and Libya were pledged to the principles of revolutionary struggle laid down by the leader of the national liberation struggle of the Arabs, the late President Nasser.

The Sudan's development along the path of social reforms, its striving towards consolidation of the progressive forces and the growth of the young republic's international influence and prestige, roused the fury and hatred of imperialism and Zionism and the local Arab reactionaries, who tried to cause a split in the Arab liberative movement and drive a wedge between the USSR and the Arab countries.

The reactionaries tried to use the "events of July 19, 1971" to turn the Sudan away from the path of social reforms and fan anti-communist hysteria with an anti-Soviet angle among the Sudan's leaders.

On the whole, however, the designs of the reactionaries met with failure, although they caused great damage to the progress of the May 1969 revolution in the Sudan. On July 19 a group of army officers led by Major Hashim al-Atta engineered a coup and seized power in Khartoum. Osman Haji Hussain, Commander of the Presidential Guard, and Abdel Moneim Ahmed, Commander of the 3rd Armoured Regiment, took part in the coup. J.M. al-Nemeiry and his followers were arrested and 49 political prisoners were released from jail. The organisers of the coup formed a new Revolutionary Council consisting of seven members. The new leaders declared that they "would establish in the Su-



dan a democratic political system with the participation of the people in the administration of the affairs of state."

The ban on the activities of the Federation of Workers' Unions, the Students' Federation, the Youth League and the Women's League was lifted and the establishment of a National Democratic Front was announced.

Nemeiry's supporters, however, managed to regain power in the Sudan. In his radio broadcast on July 23, J. Nemeiry said that the government would continue to carry out radical changes in the economic and other fields. He declared that those involved in the coup would be punished, and so would the Communists who were alleged to have supported the July 19 movement.

The same day a military tribunal passed a sentence of death by the firing squad on the commander of the Republican Guard, the commander of the 3rd Armoured Regiment, Captain Mouawiya al-Haiya and Major Hashim al-Atta on a charge of attempting to carry out a military coup. The sentence was executed the same day.

Persecution and arrests of Sudanese patriots started, first and foremost among the Communists. Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub, General Secretary of the Sudanese Communist Party, Joseph Garang, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party's Central Committee and Minister for Southern Affairs, and Shafiya Ahmed ash-Sheikh, General Secretary of the Federation of Workers' Unions and Vice-Chairman of the World Federation of Trade Unions, International Lenin Prize Laureate For Peace Among the Nations were shortly arrested. Babiker an-Nur, Mohammed az-Zein and Farouk Osman Hamadalla were sentenced to death by a military tribunal and shot.

The lives of hundreds of heroic sons of the Sudanese people, who had fought selflessly against imperialism and reaction, were threatened. The witch-hunt against the patriots was accompanied by an anti-communist hysteria unleashed by the Sudanese press, radio and television.

On July 25 N. V. Podgorny, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, sent a message to General Nemeiry appealing for greater leniency in the sentences passed against Sudanese public figures by the military tribunal.

Deeply concerned over the continuing terror, the Soviet leaders made a statement to General Nemeiry on July 26 through the Soviet Ambassador in Khartoum earnestly appealing to him not to resort to extreme measures in sentencing persons on trial in connection with the events of July 19. The assurance was expressed that such an approach would be appreciated by the nations and the progressive public at large. The statement emphasised that the Soviet Union had no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the Sudan, as this would contravene the principles of its foreign policy. At the same time it was pointed out that the Soviet and the world's democratic public were puzzled by such acts of mass terror in the Sudan when even persons not directly involved in the events of July 19 were hastily sentenced to death and the sentences immediately executed. The Soviet leaders also drew attention to certain acts by the Sudanese authorities which were prejudicial to the good relations between the Soviet Union and the Sudan.

On July 27 a special statement by TASS was published in connection with the events in the Sudan. This document stated that "all Soviet people, who deeply sympathised with the friendly Sudanese people, followed developments in the Sudan with concern. Together with the world's progressive social forces they express the hope that the Sudanese leadership will realise the danger of the path along which it is heading the country, the danger with which the situation is fraught for the destinies of the Sudanese national-democratic revolution itself, and that they will find in themselves the strength to return to the path of strengthening the unity of all the nation's patriotic forces, which ensures success in the struggle against imperialism and reaction, for independence and social progress of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan."

The Sudanese authorities paid no heed to these appeals and likewise ignored the voice of world public opinion. They continued the bloody terror, victims to which fell Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Sudanese Communist Party, Shafiya Ahmed ash-Sheikh, prominent leader of the Sudanese and international trade-union movement, Joseph Garang, member of the Political Bureau of the CC SCP and Minister for



Southern Affairs, and other patriots. These harsh measures were severely condemned by the CPSU, by all the Soviet people and the world's progressive public.

A TASS statement issued on July 31, 1971 in connection with events in the Sudan stressed that "expressing the views and feelings of the Soviet people, who angrily condemn the anti-communist campaign of terror in the Sudan, leading circles in the Soviet Union cherish the hope that the campaign of repressions against the progressive democratic forces in the Sudan will be stopped immediately and the principles proclaimed by the national democratic revolution of May 25, 1969 restored in actual practice."

The statements by the USSR and other socialist countries and by the progressive public in Arab and other states, and protests by the working class of the industrially developed capitalist countries definitely checked and then helped to put a stop to the mass arrests of Sudanese patriots, and eventually led to the release of political prisoners arrested on charges of being implicated in the "July 19 Movement".

On the whole, the anti-communist hysteria caused serious damage to the trend towards consolidation of the Sudan's progressive forces. The Communist Party of the Sudan was forced underground. Hundreds of innocent Sudanese patriots suffered.

In the autumn of 1971 presidential elections were held in the Sudan. General Nemeiry was elected President of the Republic. On October 14 he formed a new government of the Sudan consisting of 27 ministers. The new government declared that it would adhere to the principles of the May national democratic revolution. Primary party cells of the Sudanese Socialist Union—a mass political organisation called upon to safeguard and develop the principles of the May 1969 revolution—began to be set up in the country. In December 1971 all newspapers and magazines in the Sudan were made the property of the SSU.

In January 1972 the Constituent Congress of the Sudanese Socialist Union was held. It was attended by 750 people.

In February an agreement was reached in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, between President Nemeiry's Government and the insurgent forces in the Southern Sudan, putting

an end to sixteen years of bloodshed. The South was granted autonomy, and a regional parliament and government were envisaged that would be responsible to the Sudanese President. The political prisoners in the Southern Sudan were freed and rebels were pardoned and refugees allowed to return home.

In March, feeling a shortage of funds for her five-year plan and technical requirements, the Government of the Sudan signed an agreement with the FRG for a loan of 15 million dollars. This was followed by another one in May with Saudi Arabia for 76.4 million Sudanese pounds and permission from the IMF for a loan of 40 million dollars.

Also in 1972 the Government of the Sudan passed several laws to encourage the private sector and foreign investments in the economy. Moreover, it returned some nationalised companies to their former owners.

In October 1972 elections to the National Assembly were held. In the same month President Nemeiry formed a new government, also keeping for himself the post of Minister of Defence.

The new parliament worked out and in April 1973 adopted a new Constitution, based on the principles of the Pact of National Action, which proclaimed the general line of the Sudanese Socialist Union and all the peoples of Sudan for the prospective construction of a socialist society.

The Sudanese revolution has also revealed the main miscalculation of the imperialists and their agents—the rulers of Israel—in attempting to solve the insoluble problem of forcing the Arab peoples into reverse by going back into the past instead of forward into the future.

Obviously, the struggle for a new road for the Sudan is no easy one. The further development of the May revolution demands unity of all the Sudan's patriotic and revolutionary forces and anti-imperialist unity among all the Arab countries. The need for such unity is all the more urgent in face of the intrigues of imperialism and Zionism in the Sudan and throughout the Arab world. Unity in the common anti-imperialist struggle is an earnest of success in the Arabs' struggle to restore their legitimate rights and interests.



### THE LIBYAN REVOLUTION

The Libyan Arab Republic is one of the largest Arab countries with an area seven times the size of Great Britain and Northern Ireland taken together. Ninety-five per cent of that area is desert. Of the 5 per cent considered as arable land only one half per cent is used at the present time. Only 2,000,000 people are living in the vast expanse of Libya. About 60 per cent of the population is concentrated in the towns, mostly in Tripoli and Benghazi. A sixth of the population leads a nomadic life.

During the Second World War Anglo-French troops conducted military operations on Libyan territory—then an Italian colony—against the Italo-German fascists (the army of Rommel). The Libyan Army of Liberation, formed on August 9, 1940, took part in the fighting. After the battle of Stalingrad the Italian and German troops were compelled to leave Libya. The British occupied Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, and the French—Fezzan. From 1943 to December 1951 Libya was under British and French administration, which granted the USA the right to maintain a number of air bases there, notably that at Wheelus Field.

As a result of the Libyans' anti-imperialist struggle and the consistent policy of the USSR and other peace-loving forces the United Nations adopted a resolution on November 21, 1949, in accordance with which Libya was to become an independent state by January 1, 1952.

The Constituent Assembly on December 2, 1950, proclaimed Mohammed Idris al-Mahdi as-Sanusi King of the United Kingdom of Libya (comprising the three provinces mentioned above). On December 24, 1951, Libya was declared an independent constitutional kingdom headed by King Idris. In 1953 Libya was admitted to membership of the Arab League. In September 1955 Libya established diplomatic relations with the USSR, and in December of the same year the new state was admitted to membership of the United Nations.

Until the discovery of rich oil deposits at the end of the 1950s Libya's economy was based mainly on agriculture. Economically Libya was a backward agrarian country with survivals of pre-capitalist relations.

The deserts, periodic droughts, soil erosion, the low level of subsoil water in the coastal zone, the almost complete absence of forests, the numerous problems of irrigation, of increasing the area under cultivation, improving crop yields, etc., are special features of the labour-consuming nature of Libyan agriculture. Only one million hectares of land are cultivated throughout the country, of which 120,000 hectares are irrigated by subsoil waters. Grain production covered only 10 to 15 per cent of local market demand, the rest being imported. Extensive animal breeding was carried on in the inland areas.

After the discovery of oil Libya became one of the world's major producers of that product (105,000,000 tons in 1972). Oil accounts for 99 per cent of the country's exports. About 94 per cent of Libyan oil went to Western Europe—the FRG, Italy and Britain.

In 1968 there were 25 foreign oil companies operating in the country, of which 7 were big oil monopolies belonging to the International Oil Consortium. About 90 per cent of the oil produced in the country was owned by American companies.

Oil concession payments amounted in 1968 to about 1,000 million dollars.

Until the September 1969 revolution the state owned a tobacco factory in Tripoli (the largest national enterprise employing 450 workers), two alfa-packing factories, two salt-mining enterprises and three printing-works. In addition, the country had about ten thousand artisans. The marketing of their produce, however, met with great difficulties.

National capital was concentrated in trade, light industry, the crafts and housing construction. The Central Bank of Libya was not founded until 1962, followed in 1963 by a National Planning Council headed by the Prime Minister and a Planning and Development Ministry.

The five-year plan for the 1963/64-1967/68 fiscal years (the fiscal year begins April 1st.—M.A.A.) was fulfilled in the main. In the course of the five-year plan the cities were provided with a water supply and sewerage system, four times more electric power was produced, 2,000 km of new roads were built and 2,500 km of old roads modernised, etc.



The new five-year plan (1968/69-1972/73) envisaged a further growth of Libya's productive forces, employment of a larger labour force and some improvement in the workers' grievous plight. In 1968 the average income per person amounted to one thousand dollars. This average figure, however, did not reflect the true state of affairs. According to the local press, less than 1 per cent of the Libyan population gained by the oil boom. The peasants lived the way their forefathers had lived.

The national wealth was plundered by the ruling clique or squandered unproductively. One thousand million dollars were spent, for instance, on building a third capital city—Beida. And that at a time when nearly 80 per cent of Libya's population were illiterate and consumer goods prices were skyrocketing. Activities of the political parties were banned. The press was controlled by the government appointed by the King.

The foreign oil companies felt snug under the wing of the American and British military bases on Libyan territory. The American base at Wheelus Field alone was serviced by 5,000 people. The whole Libyan army in 1968 numbered 7,000 men. At the same time there were as many as 40,000 police in the country. Until recently Libya was considered by the Western press an ideal country for the activities of the foreign monopolies.

On the whole, the measures taken by Libya's monarchist government kept the degradation of agriculture more or less in check, but solved none of the country's technical or social problems. The problems of landless and land-hungry peasants, of utilisation of the communal and state lands, of organising the peasantry into co-operatives, granting them loans and improving the standard of living of the peasants, workers and artisans clamoured for solution.

As a result of the coup d'état of September 1, 1969, the army seized power in Libya, overthrew the monarchist regime and proclaimed the establishment of the Libyan Arab Republic. The newly restored Revolutionary Command Council declared that it would work for "the creation of a revolutionary Libya, a socialist, progressive Libya fighting colonialism and racialism". The Chairman of the RCC Muammar al-Qadhafi stated that the objectives of the revo-

lution were to liberate the people economically, politically and socially and to do away with exploitation, ignorance, poverty and disease.

Owing to the support of the working people the coup shortly grew into a national, anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist revolution.

The new regime was faced with grave internal difficulties, writing of which in the first issue of the newspaper *Al-Thawrah* the Prime Minister said that the revolution promised no miracles, but that an organised and determined people pursuing a scientific and judicious policy were capable of performing miracles.

During the period following the September 1969 revolution the government of Libya reviewed its foreign policy, which increasingly assumed an anti-imperialist character. Libya became more closely aligned with its Arab neighbours. Steps were taken to stabilise the situation within the country. The King's ministers, officials and senior police officers were removed from office and arrested. Decrees were issued more than doubling the minimum wage level, reducing the salaries of foreign specialists, lowering the charges for medical service and house rent, introducing pensions and restricting imports of various goods in order to stimulate local industry. Special training schools for workers were set up. The state rendered financial assistance to workers for building dwellings. Arabic was declared the official language of Libya. The republic's motto became: "Liberty, Socialism, Unity". Although its meaning is not sufficiently revealed, it unmistakably shows that no revolutionary movement in the Arab world can be successful which does not take into account the striving of the masses towards socialism.

On December 11, 1969, the Revolutionary Command Council proclaimed a provisional Constitution consecrating the republican form of government in Libya. The Constitution states that work is a right, duty and honour for all citizens of Libya. The state aims at freeing the economy from the influence of foreign monopolies, making it a national economy consisting of social, public and private sectors and moving towards socialism. Education in the republic was to be free of charge.

In November 1969 the government issued a decree par-



tially nationalising all five foreign banks in the country, followed on December 22, 1970 by their complete nationalisation and the partial nationalisation of the insurance companies. Under the recent law the state became the owner of 60 per cent of the banks' shares, the remaining 40 per cent being owned by Libyans. The state also owns 60 per cent of the insurance companies' shares. At the same time a single bank—the National Commercial Bank of Libya—was formed by fusion of three banks (the Bank of Libya, the Bank of Independence and the Arab Bank).

The main lines were defined along which Libya's economy and the participation in it of national capital were to develop. Investments in agriculture and industry were to be increased out of revenues received from oil. Vital industries were to be controlled by the state. The spheres of activity for state and private capital were divided. In the development of big industrial enterprises priority was given to state capital. A decree was passed restricting the share of foreign capital in trade and industrial development. A central planning body was set up to co-ordinate the activities of the ministries and departments. A state agency was established to deal with questions of agrarian reform and land reclamation. On July 21, 1970, the Libyan Government passed a law expropriating 38,800 hectares of cultivated lands from the remaining 575 Italian colonists and prohibiting foreigners to engage in trade, industrial production, etc., without its permission. The lands expropriated from the overthrown royal dynasty and the Italian colonists were handed over to Libyan peasants in 10-hectare allotments, according to the principle: "The land belongs to those who till it."

The new allotment holders were to be given extensive assistance, especially financial, for purchasing farm machines, seed and fertilisers. Agronomical centres were to be set up in the rural areas at which the peasants could receive expert advice on modern methods of cultivation.

An extensive programme of road building is envisaged for the agricultural areas to enable the peasants to deliver their products quickly to the market.

The long-term plans provide for the construction of 2,400 kilometres of such roads.

£L50 million, or 16.8 per cent of the investment, were

earmarked for agricultural development in the 1971/72 fiscal year compared with £L16.9 million in the 1969/70 fiscal year. The bulk of these funds (£L28.4 million) was used for opening up new lands; £L32.1 million were assigned for industrial development as against £L3.7 million during the preceding year.

Nationalisation of all the country's natural resources was announced at the beginning of 1971. Prospecting and extraction were to be performed only by the state. The revolutionary government secured Libyan workers equal rights with foreign workers, increased the numbers of Libyan employees in foreign oil companies and took a series of measures to expand the scale of training local personnel for work in the oil industry. In July 1970, Libya nationalised the foreign oil companies handling sales of oil products, at the end of 1971, the oil-fields of British Petroleum Company, and in August 1973, of the American *Oasis* companies. On September 1, 1973, the Libyan Revolutionary Command Council announced the nationalisation of 51 per cent of the property of all foreign companies operating in the territory of the Libyan Arab Republic.

The Libyan national oil company, *Linaco*, has notably stepped up its activities. It is building up its own facilities, gaining experience in management, etc. The socialist countries are helping *Linaco* to consolidate its positions. It is planned to build up a large-scale national petrochemical industry.

The decision to do away with foreign bases was the most important act of the republican government, which had the support of the whole country and of other progressive Arab countries. First the Chairman of the RCC and then the Prime Minister announced that the government had no intention of prolonging the agreement for the maintenance of US and British bases in Libya. In December 1969 a new agreement was signed in Tripoli between the Libyan Arab Republic on the one hand, and the USA and Britain on the other, providing for the withdrawal by the middle of 1970 of American and British troops from Libyan territory. The British bases were liquidated in March 1970 and evacuation of the US base at Wheelus Field was completed in June.

The evacuation of foreign troops was an important historic



step towards strengthening the independence and sovereignty of all the Maghreb countries and a solid contribution to the cause of peace in this region.

The Libyan Arab Republic is pursuing a policy of positive neutrality. One of the basic slogans of the revolution is that of Arab unity. The new Libyan regime is collaborating with other Arab states in countering the continuing aggression by Israel. Libyans at all levels, from ordinary working people to members of the government, have gone on record for developing friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

In December 1969 a meeting of the heads of three Arab states was held in Tripoli—Nasser, Nemeiry and Qadhafi, who discussed in a friendly atmosphere a long-range programme of political, economic and cultural co-operation, which was an important step towards a union between Egypt, the Sudan and Libya.

The Charter adopted by the three heads of Arab states in the Libyan capital of Tripoli on December 27, 1969 stated that the union of the three countries was linked inseparably with the struggle of the Arabs, with their striving to frustrate the designs of neocolonialism and Zionism. The aim of that struggle was to achieve social changes on the road towards progress and socialism in the interests of the Arab peoples. The Tripoli Charter proclaimed the establishment of an Arab revolutionary front, comprising Egypt, Libya and the Sudan. The potentials of the three countries were directed towards repulsing Israeli aggression and liberating occupied Arab lands.

In November 1970 the Tripoli Charter countries took a further step towards unity. November 9 saw the adoption of the Cairo Declaration, which proclaimed the idea of a federation of the three countries. The Declaration expressed the assurance that the proclaimed federation of Egypt, Libya and the Sudan would become the nucleus of the future broad-based Arab unity. Syria's adherence to the Tripoli Charter states at the end of November 1970 was an important political event along these lines.

On April 17, 1971, in the Libyan town of Benghazi President Sadat of Egypt, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Libya Qadhafi, and President Assad of

Syria signed an agreement on the Federation of Arab Republics. It was stated that the Sudan would join this agreement later on.

The Declaration instituting the Federation of Arab Republics stated that the unity of their political, military and economic potentials was an emphatic reply to imperialist and Zionist intrigues, a means of restoring their outraged dignity, and doing away with all forms of imperialism and oppression on Arab lands.

In the referendum of September 1, 1971, the vast majority of Egyptians, Syrians and Libyans voted in favour of a Federation of Arab Republics and a constitution.

The Federation is to have a single Flag, a single National Emblem, a single Anthem and its capital the city of Cairo. At the same time every member republic of the Federation is to retain its independence and machinery of state. The Federation's terms of reference provide for the drafting of the principles of foreign policy, questions of war and peace, defence and security, development of the economy, education, information, science and admission of new members. In the event of an external or internal threat arising to the security of any one republic or the Federation as a whole, the state concerned is to bring it to the notice of the Federation's leadership to enable it to take steps in the context of its prerogatives.

Supreme power in the FAR is vested in the Presidential Council consisting of the presidents of the respective republics. The Council elected Anwar Sadat President of the Federation and Ahmed Khatib, its Prime Minister.

The highest legislative body of the Federation is the Combined National Assembly consisting of 20 members from each of the national assemblies of the three countries.

At a meeting between the leaders of the three member-states of the Federation of Arab Republics, December 22-24, 1971, seventeen important decisions were passed concerning the organisation of the Federation.

After the establishment of the Federation all treaties and agreements previously concluded remained in force. Each republic has also the right to conclude new agreements with foreign states and exchange diplomatic and consular missions with them.



General command of the armed forces in each republic of the Federation is vested in its president or any appropriate official.

Pending the organising of a united all-Arab movement—a political front—the political leadership in each republic bears responsibility for ideological work in its country.

The activities of political organisations of any one republic on the territory of another country are prohibited, with the exception of the activities of members of the leadership of the political front consisting of the leaders of the political organisations of the three republics.

On the day of the referendum the Cairo newspaper *Al-Gomhuriya* wrote that Arab public opinion regarded the Federation as a means of struggle for national liberation, for coping with political, economic and social backwardness. The unification of the three countries, which possess considerable natural resources and have a population of over forty million, will create new opportunities for stepping up the struggle against imperialism and Zionism. It is this that determines the attitude towards the Federation on the part of Arab progressive forces. The Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party, before the national vote was taken, called upon all Communists and the masses of Syria, Egypt and Libya to approve the federal constitution, mobilise all efforts to strengthen democracy, and fight for social progress and for the anti-imperialist orientation of the Federation.

The significance of the Federation is heightened by the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict. The joint policy of these three countries strengthens their positions in the face of Israeli aggression, while at the same time improving the prospects for establishing peace in the Middle East.

The consolidation of relations between the FAR countries continued during 1972. A Federal Council was formed for economic planning and also federal agencies for air transport, trade, sea transport, fisheries, iron and steel, oil, and defence industries, agriculture, etc. Laws were passed facilitating the movements of capital, labour, and commercial and service exchanges between the member countries. In May 1972 the First Secretary of the Egyptian Arab Socialist Union and the General Secretary of the Arab Socialist

Union of Libya reached an agreement on merging the two parties into a single organisation.

On August 2, 1972, in Benghazi, President Sadat and the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, Colonel Qadhafi, agreed in principle to merge Egypt and Libya into a single state. On September 18, the two leaders signed an agreement setting up a single political leadership and nine joint commissions to prepare a programme of staged unification of the two countries providing for a series of steps to bring their policies, economies and culture closer together by a gradual process.

By a decree of August 30, 1973, the United Political Leadership set up as of September 1 of the same year the joint Constituent Assembly of 50 delegates from Libya and 50 from Egypt. The Assembly appealed for drafting the Constitution and nominating the President of the future united state. It is contemplated to hold a referendum on the Constitution and the candidate for the Presidency in each country. The date of the referendum is to be fixed.

The Libyan revolution is still having a hard time. It has to cope with factors aimed at undermining the republican regime. These are—threats of open interference in the affairs of Libya, the strong positions of the oil monopolies, the existence of the comprador Libyan bourgeoisie and the religious and tribal cliques, which were nurtured by the previous monarchist regime. The September revolution carried out by the army has not yet scrapped the old machinery of state. The bureaucratic machinery, honeycombed by corrupt elements, was geared, as it were, to the engine of the revolution. Key elements in it are now being replaced, but the revolutionary regime lacks the necessary personnel—engineers, technicians and skilled workers. The army still remains the base of the September revolution. The government is devoting considerable attention to building up a new national army and equipping it with modern weapons. The majority of the nation is on the side of the army, but so far there is no organised support of the masses. Realising this, the RCC on June 11, 1971 announced the setting up of the Arab Socialist Union, a mass political organisation of the revolution. In Libya 364 primary units of the Union have been organised



with a membership of 300,000, that is to say, embracing practically all Libyans who have reached the age of 18. The first national congress of the Libyan ASU was held in Tripoli in March-April 1972.

The foreign oil monopolies, in co-operation with Libyan reactionaries, are obviously bent on preventing the September 1969 revolution from developing in depth, preventing the expansion of its social base. It is no secret that the imperialist forces are harbouring plans of a split within the Libyan army, plans for provoking military clashes between its various units.

A Libyan Government delegation headed by Major Abdel Salam Jellud, member of the Revolutionary Command Council and Minister of Economics and Industry, visited the Soviet Union from February 23 to March 4, 1972. During talks the two sides discussed frankly questions concerning the development of relations between the two countries and exchanged views on a number of current international issues.

Following the talks, an agreement was signed on economic and technical co-operation between the USSR and Libya.

Before the delegation left, Major Jellud said that the main purpose of the visit had been to establish firm and close links with the Soviet Union in the political, economic and other fields.

On the question of the development of relations between the USSR and Libya, he said that the Libyan revolution in its struggle against imperialism was solidary with all revolutionary forces throughout the world. The Libyan revolution attached great importance to the development of all-round relations with the Soviet Union, which was in the interests of all revolutionary forces in the Middle East and also of progressive forces all over the world. Such relations should clearly be firm, diverse and frank, since Libya and the USSR shared common goals—the struggle for peace, freedom and independence of all peoples inhabiting our planet.

Commenting on the results of the Moscow talks, Major Jellud said that the discussions they had were frank, useful and fruitful. The considerable practical results achieved

during the talks would be implemented in the very near future. These results were in the interests not only of the Libyan people but of all the Arab progressive forces, since co-operation between the USSR and the Arab countries was a basis for the growth of their economic power and defence capability.

The Major then spoke of his impressions of the USSR. He mentioned, in particular, the magnificent achievements of the Soviet people in the service of peace and progress. "We greatly admire the achievements of the Soviet Union and are very happy to have had the opportunity to get to know them better," he said.

"The forces of imperialism try to distort the truth about the USSR, its outstanding achievements in politics, economics and social life in every possible way. However, we now have a true picture of life in the Soviet Union. We have seen with our own eyes the fruits of the socialist revolution which enabled the Soviet people to transform their country into a great power economically and militarily.

"We have seen the man of emancipated labour in the USSR. Indeed, it is this tremendous love for labour that is most impressive of all. All the outstanding achievements of your country are the achievements of the working people."

The head of the Libyan delegation referred, in particular, to the success the USSR had achieved in education and training the younger generation and the real equality of all Soviet people.

In conclusion he said: "Our visit is the beginning of a real development of all-round relations between our countries. We know that there is love and respect for our people in the Soviet Union. We felt that we were among real friends here. I should like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Party and Government leaders of the USSR, Leonid Brezhnev, Nikolai Podgorny and Alexei Kosygin, and also to the whole friendly Soviet people for the cordiality and hospitality with which we were surrounded in the Soviet Union."

After the signing of the Libyan-Soviet agreement on economic and technical assistance, Libya expanded her links with the other socialist countries too.



In July 1972 a new government was formed in Libya under Major Jellud.

On the whole, the Libyan Arab Republic is now undergoing a process of consolidation of the new regime, which is making its first steps. The future of the Libyan revolution depends on the exercise of vigilance, on unity and the backing of the broad masses.

## FIRST SUCCESSES ON THE ROAD TO ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Lenin pointed out that the path to socialism "will be incredibly involved..."<sup>1</sup> inasmuch as it means a radical break with century-old traditions affecting the interests of all classes and social groups, involves the creation of an entirely new type of social relationships and the education of people with a new psychology, a new outlook.

The practice of socialist reforms has shown that the assumption of political power by the proletariat and socialisation of the means of production create merely objective premises, objective possibilities for solving all these problems. How these possibilities are realised in practice depends first of all on the ruling parties, on their skill in the Marxist-Leninist handling of the complex tasks which life poses. Such skill is not easily acquired. It comes as a result of the generalisation of the experience of the people, as a result of reflection, of analysis of past progress and possible prospects.

Like every edifice, whose construction starts from the foundation, the stupendous task of socialist construction first of all requires the creation of the material and technical basis for it.

The experience of over half a century of running socialist economy convincingly proves that economic management is perhaps the most difficult and most creative of all the tasks that confront a country after the revolution. Here, as, incidentally, in other spheres of social life, there are, practically speaking, no final solutions that take care of everything once and for all. The economy is a complex and dynamic organism whose development itself constantly poses new problems.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 130.



No complexities, however, can invalidate the general principles of socialist development. The practice of the socialist countries reaffirms the significance of Marxist-Leninist ideas concerning the general pattern of development of socialist society, the need for one or another form of the dictatorship of the proletariat during the transition period from capitalism to socialism.

Lenin clearly defined the prospects for the possible development of economically underdeveloped countries along the non-capitalist path, that is, towards socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage. Lenin's forecast has come true. In recent years quite a number of liberated countries have embarked on serious and profound reforms in all spheres of social life, proclaiming socialism as their ultimate aim. Naturally, this is no light task for emergent states, whose development had been arrested for centuries by the colonialists. They have to create productive forces of such a level as is required by socialism. They have to establish new relations of production, remodel people's psychology, build up a new apparatus of administration leaning on the popular masses. Such a path of development is bound to have a number of "gradual preliminary stages" and involve "special transitory measures", as Lenin put it.

To solve all these problems hard work is required on the part of all the people—workers, peasants and intellectuals, under the leadership of their vanguard, which clearly sees its socialist goals and the road towards them. The most important thing here is unity between all progressive democratic forces without exception. The peoples of the countries that have opted for the non-capitalist path of development are tackling this big job with enthusiasm, because they know they are doing it for the good of all the working people, in the interest of their country's genuine independence and prosperity.

The non-capitalist path of development of the liberated Arab countries towards socialism is strewn with great difficulties, a clear understanding of which is a primary condition for overcoming them.

Capitalism develops spontaneously. Small-scale production prevailing in town and country in the Arab world gives birth to capitalism every hour and day. For capitalism to develop,

therefore, it is enough to rely on the operation of spontaneous processes occurring in the economy.

Non-capitalist development is the direct opposite of capitalist development. It cannot proceed spontaneously. Non-capitalist development is a consciously directed development based on a knowledge of economic laws.

Therefore, development along the non-capitalist path is possible only on condition that political power in the country belongs to the socialist forces which are wholly dedicated to the interests of the working people and are prepared to curb and oust the exploiter elements that are opposed to those interests.

The existence of a political power capable of ensuring a non-capitalist path of development is the primary objective law governing such development.

In some Arab countries during colonialist rule the proletariat did not take shape as a class. These countries often lack experienced revolutionary parties tried and tested in battle. In such countries leadership of non-capitalist development may be assumed by revolutionary democrats, by the more progressive members of the non-exploiting sections of society.

Hence the need for uniting all patriotic and anti-imperialist forces within the country and setting up a united front of progressive forces and organisations.

The non-capitalist path is characterised today by general democratic reforms and the consistent prosecution of an anti-imperialist policy; it envisages a broad unification of class forces embracing the worker and peasant masses, the wide semi-proletarian sections, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie and patriotic representatives of national capital.

The non-capitalist path of development encounters resistance on the part of world imperialism as well as of internal reaction. Practically, it is therefore impossible in isolation from the world socialist system. The second objective law governing non-capitalist development is that it rests on the support of the countries where the proletariat has been victorious and on the forces of revolution in the industrially developed capitalist countries.

Thirdly, non-capitalist development requires clear knowledge of an economic programme and economic strategy and scientific leadership of that development.



To secure economic development for the good of the people independently of world capitalist economy a number of profound reforms of an economic nature would have to be carried out. There are two interconnected groups of such reforms. One group consists in doing away with the old economic relationships of dependence on imperialism and its local social backing, which hinder such development. But doing away with the old and harmful does not yet signify creation of the new. Therefore, the second group of reforms consists in creating new, more progressive relationships capable of ensuring development of the economy in the national interest to meet the needs of the people and not of their exploiters.

To abolish the old relationships that hinder the rapid development of the economy in the national interest it is necessary, in particular, to carry out the following reforms in economic relations: abolition of feudal and usurious land-ownership; nationalisation of enterprises and property of foreign monopolies; abolition of unbalanced exchange and adoption of exchange on mutually advantageous lines; protection of the national market and national industry against the destructive influence of foreign monopoly competition; elimination of one-sided specialisation; liquidation of usury capital and peasants' debts to money-lenders and feudalists, and so on.

The following are essential conditions for the formation of new, more progressive relationships: handing the land over to those who work it; creation of a developed national industry producing the instruments of production; creation of a state sector in industry and agriculture, not subject to the blind forces of capitalism and capable of taking the lead in building up an independent economy; concentration in the hands of the state of economic key positions enabling development to be guided in the proper direction (banks, power systems, transport facilities, etc.); restriction of spontaneous capitalist elements standing in the way of planned development of the economy.

Without such reforms no national economy can be built capable of quickly and effectively raising the standard of living of the masses and holding its own in face of imperialism.

The set of measures aimed at gradually eliminating back-

ward economic relationships and developing progressive ones forms the basis and substance of the economic programme of non-capitalist development.

This programme cannot be the same for all countries that have taken the non-capitalist path. On the contrary, it is concrete for each given country, since it depends on the level of development of the old relationships that have to be weakened or destroyed, and on the degree to which the masses and the country as a whole are prepared for one or another reform in economic life as provided for in the economic programme.

The ultimate aim of the economic programme of non-capitalist development is the transition to socialism bypassing capitalism, or, at least, its advanced stage.

Non-capitalist development absolutely excludes the unscientific practice of "big leaps", that is, of a self-willed attempt to skip objectively necessary stages of development. The advantages of non-capitalist development are not that it makes possible an immediate changeover from the wooden plough to overall mechanisation of agriculture, but that it substantially quickens that process.

The non-capitalist path envisages the greatest possible use of all the productive forces and all the labour resources of the given country for increasing the volume of material values produced in it. This process may find expression also in the creation of small enterprises, in the gradual expansion of production and market capacity in which these enterprises play their part. The non-capitalist path of development does not imply the abolition of small-scale capitalist enterprise which is in the national interest, or of simple commodity production in town and country. Under the non-capitalist path of development they lose none of their significance. The task is to speed up the development of small-scale production and its eventual transformation into large-scale social production.

The non-capitalist path presupposes direct liquidation of big and partly medium capital. But it does not call for the abolition of the small capitalist enterprises, although it limits the scale of these enterprises and the nature of their activities in order to have capital serve the people, and not the people serve capital.



Of primary significance in our day is Lenin's thesis to the effect that in the epoch of imperialism the aims of the struggle for democracy and those of the struggle for socialism are merging more and more into a single common current. The Communist Parties in the bourgeois countries bear this in mind today when they put forward such programmes of struggle for democracy as serve to rally the masses behind the working class and lead them up to the following stage—that of the struggle for socialism. This strategy is fully in keeping with the ideas formulated in his day by Lenin. In 1917, in his article "The Impending Catastrophe and How To Combat It", he pointed out that profound democratic reforms could lead to the establishment of a revolutionary democratic state in which the foundations of big capital's dominance would be radically undermined. This, he wrote, "will *still not* be socialism, but it will *no longer* be capitalism. It will be a tremendous *step towards* socialism."<sup>1</sup>

But whatever transitory stages the revolutionary masses may have to pass through, whatever intermediate programmes and slogans the Communists may put forward to rally these masses, they always remember that the last, decisive battle, the battle for the overthrow of capitalism, the battle for socialism, lies ahead. The Communists are called Communists because their entire struggle pursues this chief and ultimate goal. It is to attain this goal that they unite more and more detachments of new fighters around the working class. It is in the name of this goal that they fight untiringly for unity in the ranks of the working class itself, against all disrupters—from the Right-wing leaders of Social Democracy down to the advocates of "Left" adventurism.

The possibility of recruiting the masses to the everyday task of running the state was regarded by Lenin as the greatest advantage of socialism. He stressed the need "to teach the people the art of administration".<sup>2</sup>

"There can be no victorious socialism that does not practise full democracy," he wrote.<sup>3</sup>

However concrete the content of the economic programme

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Vol. 28, p. 426.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Vol. 22, p. 144.

for non-capitalist development, it can never be realised immediately by decree. Therefore, after its content has been clarified, the inevitable next step is to devise the economic strategy of non-capitalist development.

Proceeding from the concrete socio-economic conditions prevailing in Egypt, Syria and Algeria the Arab revolutionary democrats, as we have already remarked above, first pursued a policy of restricting and ousting foreign, then national capital, by way of establishing and consolidating the state sector, by way of gradual transformation of private capitalist enterprises into state enterprises through various forms of state capitalism.

Summing up the experience of socialist construction, the first of its kind in human history, Lenin worked out a programme for the construction of socialism in the USSR. This programme has gone down in history under the name of the New Economic Policy, or NEP (new in relation to the policy of War Communism). The components of NEP were: an alliance between the workers and the peasants with the leading role of the working class; nationalisation of the basic means of production; retention of small-scale commodity production and freedom of trade; a degree of freedom for small capitalists and their utilisation for the purposes of socialist construction; restriction and dislodgement of capitalist elements; socialist industrialisation; socialist transformation of agriculture by switching peasant farming onto collective rails, and carrying out a cultural revolution.

The economic policy of the state during the transition period entails an intense struggle of the socialist elements against the capitalist elements and their dislodgement from the country's economy.

Experience of the development of the liberated countries which have taken the non-capitalist path shows that the basic principles of Lenin's economic policy retain their validity under the new historical conditions and are being successfully applied to the concrete conditions prevailing in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America for the purpose of building the new society.

Lenin said: "This task which we are working on now, for the time being on our own, seems to be a purely Russian



one, but in reality it is a task which all socialists will face."<sup>1</sup>

The experience of socialist construction in other countries confirms this judgement of Lenin's. The economic policy of the people's democracies of Europe and Asia, of Egypt and other countries of a socialist orientation basically coincides with NEP in the Soviet Union. This is due to the fact that there exist in these countries the same forms of economy that had once prevailed in the Soviet Union.

The economic policy of the transition-period state in Egypt provides for the retention of commodity relations for the purpose of developing an exchange of produce between the different proprietors: the state on the one hand, and the millions of peasants on the other. Lenin, in his day, urged the need for "learning to trade", in order economically to beat capitalism with its own weapon.

The problem was to master the business of trade, to increase in it the share of the socialist system and as a result of the growth of the state's economic might to secure the victory of socialism over capitalism. The economic policy of Egypt and other Arab countries of the socialist orientation is now directed towards the retention of capitalist elements with the state keeping control of economic commanding heights.

#### INTRODUCTION OF PLANNING AND A POLICY OF INDUSTRIALISATION

The efforts of the people of Egypt and other countries of a socialist orientation are now directed towards the creation of a material and technical base for the transition to socialism, the main element of which is industrialisation. It should be noted in this connection that the countries which have opted in favour of the socialist path are receiving great material, financial and other assistance from the socialist countries, besides using foreign loans from capitalist countries. All this enables the developing countries, notably Egypt, Syria and Algeria, despite tremendous difficulties, to deal with the problem of accumulation more successfully than it was once dealt with in the USSR. While it took

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 177.

England, which had rich sources of accumulation, 100 years and the USA 75 years to carry out capitalist industrialisation, the Soviet Union, thanks to the advantages of the new social system, carried out socialist industrialisation in the course of less than three five-year-plan periods.

As a result of industrialisation in the USSR unemployment disappeared, the material and cultural level of the population rose sharply, the problem of trained personnel was solved, all branches of the national economy were reconstructed and cardinal changes were effected in the distribution of the productive forces, which eliminated inequality among the nations. There was a sharp rise also in Soviet defence potential. Socialist industrialisation was the basic element in the economic development of the people's democracies of Europe and Asia, but it had specific features of its own here.

For one thing, socialist industrialisation in these countries was effected in close economic co-operation with and fraternal assistance from the established world community of socialist nations. Above all, these countries drew on the assistance and vast experience of the USSR. Industrial development was accelerated by various forms of co-operation between the socialist countries, such as foreign trade on mutually advantageous terms, reciprocal credits, scientific and technological co-operation, assistance by skilled personnel, co-ordination of economic development plans, and so on. Secondly, socialist industrialisation in these countries developed under conditions of a steadily widening socialist international division of labour. The states of people's democracy were able, by means of specialisation and co-operation with other socialist countries, to develop those branches of industry for which there existed more favourable economic and natural prospects of development. Thirdly, under the existing world system the countries of people's democracy were able to develop industrial production by optimum adjustment of growth rates between production of the means of production and production of articles of consumption.

The countries of people's democracy overcame their technical and economic lag in the shortest space of time, and most of them have become industrial-agrarian countries.



The experience of planned socialist industrialisation in the USSR and other socialist countries is now being effectively used by Egypt, Syria, Algeria and other liberated countries. And although industrialisation in these countries has not yet assumed a clearly socialist character, it is nevertheless building up the material and technical basis for a socialist economy. Arab revolutionary democrats are aware that industrialisation is an essential condition for the independent development of the Arabs, that without diversified industrial development none of the liberated countries can hope to overcome its economic lag, raise the standard of living of the population and preserve its independent existence. For an example, let us take the experience of Egypt.

In the course of implementing revolutionary measures to dislodge foreign capital, restrict private capitalist activities and strengthen the state sector, the government of Egypt began to introduce principles of planning into the management of economic development. With the development of the July 1952 Revolution planning steadily grew more comprehensive and deep-going.

In the development of planning practices in the Egyptian economy three stages can be traced, corresponding to the steady expansion and consolidation of the state sector. At the first stage (1952-1956), when the state sector in Egypt's economy was a negligible factor, planning was confined to determining the country's most urgent requirements and to devising small development programmes for one or another branch of the economy. Three weeks after the July 1952 Revolution saw the formation in Egypt of a Permanent Council for the Development of National Production. A Committee for the Organisation of Major Works was set up in August 1953, and a Supreme Public Services Council in October 1953.

State interference in Egypt's economic life was hastened by the events of late 1956. Following the Anglo-Franco-Israeli aggression the government sequestered and Egyptised the foreign banks, insurance companies, commercial agencies and foreign trade firms and set up in January 1957 an Economic Organisation of Egypt and a Supreme National Planning Council. The second stage in the introduction

of planning practices was initiated (July 1956-1960).

This period saw the establishment of the country's basic planning bodies. The Supreme National Planning Council headed by the President of the Republic began to act as an effective body. In March 1957 the Permanent Council for the Development of National Production and the Supreme Public Services Council were replaced by the Technical Committee for National Planning headed by the Minister for Planning Affairs.

A five-year industrialisation programme was shortly drawn up and a special state organisation set up to implement it. Stimulation of production of goods in short supply was an important guideline in this programme.

The Soviet Union's readiness to render economic and technological assistance enabled the Egyptian Government to consider a number of projects for developing, among others, the metallurgical, engineering and wool industries. The initial targets of the five-year industrialisation programme were raised to 250 and later to 330 million Egyptian pounds by the inclusion of new projects.

The Soviet Union's agreement to co-operate in the construction of the Aswan High Dam strengthened still further the planning basis of Egypt's economy.

The construction of the High Dam put an immediate and great strain on the country's economic resources, a strain that only a state introducing more and more planned regulation into everyday life could withstand. It was with the start of construction work on the High Dam that planned targets first began to be carried out in Egypt on a large scale. A decree was issued in February 1959 setting up planning departments in each ministry and in every state organisation.

This period saw the establishment of all the basic state planning bodies in the shape of the Supreme National Planning Council headed by the President, the Central Ministerial Committee for National Planning set up in 1959 and headed by the Prime Minister, and the National Planning Committee under the Minister for Planning Affairs.

With the constitution of the United Arab Republic a ten-year programme of economic and social development



was adopted, which was started on as from July 1, 1960, i.e., from the beginning of the 1960/61 fiscal year.

The nationalisation in 1961 of the basic means of production formerly owned by the big and some of the middle national bourgeoisie marked a further consolidation of the state sector and planning practices in Egypt and initiated the third stage in planning.

Under the new ten-year programme the Egyptian leaders planned to double the national income in the course of the 1960/61-1969/70 fiscal years. Schedules were drafted for two five-year-plan periods, including those for 1960/61-1964/65 and 1965/66-1969/70. During the fulfilment of the first five-year plan a number of serious difficulties had to be overcome. The draft plan was endorsed before promulgation of the nationalisation law in 1961. Important changes therefore had to be introduced as a result of the consolidation of the state sector. In the course of the plan's fulfilment errors in investment estimates came to light. Some projects required larger financial and material resources and manpower and longer periods than were originally provided for. Shortage of certain types of raw materials and equipment led to price increases.

In the course of the plan's fulfilment a lack of planning experience was revealed on the part of the state agencies and the new managers of the nationalised enterprises and industries. There was an imbalance between consumption and accumulation. The situation was aggravated by the fact that owing to the cotton crop failure during the second year of the plan the state disposed of considerably less export resources than the plan provided for. Under the circumstances the UAR was obliged to have recourse to foreign loans, not only for financing industrial projects, but for meeting consumer demand. Things were complicated by the downward trend of prices on cotton and other Egyptian export items on the world market. Furthermore, the plans erred on the side of proper estimation of the number of technical specialists required. Personnel training was maladjusted. All this often compelled the government to appoint poorly trained men to key posts.

Despite these difficulties in carrying out the first five-year programme Egypt made considerable progress along the

road of economic independence. This found expression above all in an increase in investments, in the gross product, the national income and employment. According to the figures of plan fulfilment, capital investments in the UAR economy during the first five-year programme amounted to £E1,513 million or 96 per cent of planned target. Annual investments during the first five-year programme averaged £E302,600,000 or about 19 per cent of Egypt's national income. Out of a total sum of investments of £E1,513 million foreign loans and credits accounted for £E419,000,000, the rest being raised from internal sources, chiefly from the profits of the state sector enterprises. Annual investments during the first five-year programme were as follows (million Egyptian pounds): in 1960/61—225, in 1961/62—251.1, in 1962/63—299.6, in 1963/64—372.4, and in 1964/65—364.3 as against 171.4 during the 1959/60 base year.

Planned Targets and Actual Investments by Industries During the First Five-Year Programme of 1960/61-1964/65 (million Egyptian pounds)<sup>1</sup>

Industry	Planned targets	Actual investments	Fulfilment percentage
Agriculture	117.1	118.4	101.1
Irrigation and drainage	183	138	75.4
Aswan High Dam	47.3	98.6	208.5
Industry	444.7	403.9	90.8
Power	144.2	112.6	78.1
Construction	5	13.2	246
Transport and communications	244	270.8	111
Suez Canal	35	23.4	66.9
Trade and finance	5	19.5	390
Housing	199	161.5	81.2
Public utilities	50.4	50.5	100.2
Other services	102.2	102.6	100.4
Total:	1,576.9	1,513	95.9

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Commission for Africa. Conference of African Planners, Addis Ababa, 14-15 XII, 1967, p. 66.*



In agriculture, during the first five-year programme period, a cadastre was carried out on an area of 3,200,000 feddans of cultivated lands. About 540,000 feddans of dry farming land were prepared for irrigation farming, for which purpose several hundred kilometres of main canals and several thousand kilometres of minor canals were built. The drainage system was widened, irrigation techniques were improved, new high-yielding varieties of crops and highly productive cattle were introduced, better use was made of fertilisers, machines and implements, and so on.

In industry several hundred factories and plants were put into service, many of which became precursors to new branches of production, such as mechanical engineering, motor-vehicle construction, tractor construction, instrument making, aircraft construction and other industries. Investments in industrial production and power engineering during the five-year period amounted to £E516,500,000 or 34.1 per cent of all investments.

875,000 people were employed in industry and power engineering in Egypt in 1964/65 compared with 602,000 in 1959/60 and 395,000 in 1948.

Egypt's engineering industry is now in a position to produce many types of metal-cutting lathes, sea-going vessels, steam boilers, stationary diesels, pumps, tractors, motor cars and lorries, calculating machines, typewriters, refrigerators, radio and television sets, etc. By reducing imports of these goods Egypt economises on foreign currency expenditure, which it is able to divert to further development of the economy, besides greatly reducing its dependence on monopoly capital.

The tremendous positive significance of this process for the whole course of social development in Egypt can scarcely be overestimated. At the same time such aspects of it as are capable of exercising a certain negative influence on the workers' movement within the country cannot be overlooked. The thing is that with the rapid growth of the working class its ranks are being swelled by large masses of the non-proletarian population, namely, ignorant, down-trodden peasants from the remotest depths of the country, ruined artisans, small tradesmen and lumpen-proletariat. Few in numbers as it is, the regular proletariat of Egypt is

submerged, as it were, by the non-proletarian mass, which still has one foot in the village and is bound by a thousand threads to small property and cannot immediately become aware of itself as a part of the new, revolutionary class, cannot imbibe its ideology. For the majority of these people the highest ideal is to save up enough money to repair the shaken fortunes of their farms or to start a business of their own, however small. It will take years of hard struggle for these new workers to realise how vain their hopes are and for them to adopt the views and interests of the proletariat and organically "grow into" its ranks.

And so an essentially progressive event such as the numerical growth of the working class may have (and in some countries is having) the temporary effect of reducing the level of class consciousness of the proletariat and creating extra difficulties in the labour movement.

Simultaneously with the growth of petty-bourgeois influence on the working class, however, there is inversely a growing possibility of proletarian influence on the peasants and the urban middle strata, the possibility of their acting together to defend their rights, the possibility of an alliance between them. Making this possibility a reality depends largely on the degree of organisation of the working class itself, on the political maturity of its organisations. Under the new conditions their role as militant vanguard of the working masses is heightened immeasurably. There is hardly any need to prove that the proletarian organisations in the Arab countries can successfully perform this role of theirs and make the labour movement a decisive factor of social development only given conditions of united action both on a national and international scale.

The results of the first five-year programme show that Egypt has chosen the right path of development in the direction of socialism. Expansion of the state sector, the greater regulating role played by the state in the economy, the introduction of planning principles and the implementation of other socio-economic measures have helped to speed up the growth of the national income in Egypt two and a half times compared with the annual rate of growth of the population. The annual growth rates of industrial output in the UAR during the first five-year period amounted to



7.4 per cent compared with 4.4 per cent in other developing countries and 5.5 per cent in industrial capitalist countries. Agrarian Egypt has become an agrarian-industrial country.

Great assistance in carrying out the first five-year programme was rendered Egypt by the countries of the socialist community. These countries, in accordance with existing agreements, take an active part in fulfilment of the new programme of economic and social development in Egypt.

Capital investments in the 1965/66 fiscal year, the first year of the second five-year programme, amounted to £E379,100,000, of which £E277,400,000 were raised from local sources.

The year 1965/66 saw another 185,000 new workers and other employees drafted into the UAR economy, and by the year 1966/67 the total number of the employed population had reached the figure of 7,500,000.

In the course of the first year's fulfilment of the second five-year programme further imbalances in the development of the economy came to light. The accumulation fund dropped from 14.2 to 11.2 per cent. Growth of consumption led to increased imports and reduced exports. In addition, the country had to pay off loans previously received. All this led to Egypt experiencing a shortage of hard currency. Under the circumstances the Egyptian Government decided to lengthen the five-year programme to seven years.

Investments for the 1966/67 fiscal year were set at £E377,000,000, of which 93.6 per cent were to go to the state sector and 6.4 per cent to the private sector.

Actual investments in 1966/67 amounted to £E364,000,000. The gross product was estimated at £E4,375 million and the national income at £E2,180 million.

President Nasser reported that capital investments during 15 years since the July 1952 Revolution totalled almost £E3,000 million, and as many as 830 new factories and plants had been put into operation. As a result, industrial output increased fourfold.

In order to complete the original ten-year programme of economic and social development for 1960/61-1969/70 it was decided, in the course of fulfilment of the second year of the seven-year programme, to adopt a new programme for the three fiscal years 1967/68-1969/70.

The three-year programme originally provided for the national income in 1969/70 reaching the figure of £E2,483 million, that is, an increase of 93.2 per cent over the base year 1959/60. For this purpose it was planned to invest £E1,085 million in the national economy, or £E362,000,000 annually in the course of three years (1967/68-1969/70).

In March 1967, however, the Supreme Executive Committee of the Arab Socialist Union issued directives setting investments under the three-year programme (1967/68-1969/70) at £E1,290 million, of which £E54.7 million was to be held in reserve. In 1969/70 the gross product was to amount to £E4,936 million, reaching the level originally set by the ten-year programme, while the national income was to reach £E2,515.7 million instead of the £E2,570 million envisaged under the original programme. Under the directives of the ASU investments together with reserves were fixed at £E408 million for the first year, £E440 million for the second year and £E442 million for the third year. These investments enabled a 7 per cent increase to be made annually in the UAR's national income. Taking into consideration the annual rate of growth of the population, which in recent years was 2.8 per cent, the actual per capita income was planned to increase annually by 4 per cent.

The new plan envisaged both the completion of projects that had already been started and realisation of those that could be carried out within three years and were capable of giving quick return and producing goods for export. At the same time allowance was made for providing the planned projects with local raw material (not less than 65 per cent) and trained personnel. The plan was orientated on the minimum use of foreign currency. On the whole, the planners of the three-year programme, without reducing the total volume of planned production, calculated on redistributing funds for projects under construction in such a way as to get a quick return, and, on this basis, to carry out further investments.

The planners provided for the further development of industry, regarded as the foundation of Egypt's economic independence. In the new programme great attention was given to questions concerning the rational use of mineral and other resources, the fullest possible utilisation of the



labour force and production capacities, rigid economy in all branches of the national economy and improvement of the quality of goods produced to enable them to compete on the world market. All possible steps were taken to make investments more effective. Priority, as before, was given to the state sector and heavy industry. Generation of electricity was to be raised from 5,600 million to 8,900 million kilowatt-hours.

During the three-year period the new industrial areas created since the July Revolution were to be further developed. The Aswan industrial area acquired still greater significance.

The three-year plan envisaged the recruitment of new groups of the able-bodied but non-working population in production and a considerable improvement in the standard of living. The new programme provided for higher growth rates in agriculture and for enhancing its role in the national economy as a source of food and raw material supply.

The six-day June 1967 war between Israel and the Arab countries, however, necessitated a further revision of the three-year programme. The lost battle demanded higher military expenditure on defence. In place of the initial £E408,000,000 assigned for capital investments in the 1967/68 fiscal year only £E292,000,000 was invested, of which £E276,000,000 was to go to the state sector. This cut in capital investments was due also to the need for making good the ruin caused by the war and for increasing defence expenditure by £E59,000,000 compared with that of the previous year. During the 1968/69 fiscal year, that is, the second year of the three-year programme, investments amounted to £E312,300,000, including £E100,000,000 in foreign currency. The biggest investments that year went to industry and power (£E104,500,000), agriculture and the Aswan High Dam (£E69,000,000) and to transport and communications. Capital investments in the 1969/70 fiscal year, that is, the last year of the three-year programme, amounted to £E340,000,000, of which £E28,000,000 were on account of the private sector. During the year 25 industrial projects were launched totalling a cost of £E140,000,000.

The largest projects were: completion of the Aswan High

Dam, the hydroelectric power station, transmission line, construction of the Helwan Metallurgical Combine, the development of 40,000 feddans of new lands, introduction of crop rotation on 250,000 feddans of opened-up land, electrification of 200 villages, etc.

On the whole, during three years of continuing Israeli aggression the annual growth rate of Egypt's national income was 4.3 per cent. Gross production in 1969/70 was estimated at £E4,570 million, that is £E676.6 million more than in the 1964/65 fiscal year. The number of workers increased during the second five-year plan by 630,000 and has reached the figure of 8,004,000. It should be noted that the occupation of Arab territories and Israeli aggression continued to cause great damage to Egypt and other countries in this area. Thus, Egypt during 1969-70, according to G. A. Nasser, was obliged to maintain an army of half a million at an expense of £E500,000,000.

On the whole in the period from the beginning of the Israeli aggression in 1967 to the outbreak of hostilities in October 1973, Egypt's military outlays added up to £E4,254 million. Notwithstanding its great material and financial defence expenditure, Egypt went ahead with its economic development programme. In the period from fiscal 1967/68 to the end of 1972, its investments in the economy amounted to £E1,846 million. Egypt's gross industrial output in 1972 was eight times that of 1952.

Egypt prepared a new ten-year programme of national economic and social development for the period 1973-1982. Investment is expected to amount to more than 8,500 million Egyptian pounds. It is intended to provide work for another 3 million people, to double industrial production and increase agricultural output by 50 per cent. A no less important aspect of Egypt's development after the June 1967 events is the qualitative changes in its economy. After the June defeat the Egyptian leadership continued its policy of strengthening the state and co-operative sectors.

Wholesale trade was nationalised on October 15, 1967. The intention to do so was announced by President Nasser on June 5, 1965, in his speech at Damanhur. At that time it was planned to carry out the nationalisation in the course of three years. After the June war, however, it became



evident that by leaving the wholesale trade in private hands great damage was done to the state.

Great demonstrations of workers and students in Cairo, Helwan and other cities on June 9 and 10, 1967 and in February 1968 brought into sharp focus the question of the country's future development.

The conservative elements, under pretence of preserving "national unity", demanded that "the existing state of affairs in Egypt be put in deep freeze" and all changes be avoided while the war with Israel continued. What is more, the former Vice-Presidents Abdel Hakim Amer and Zakaria Mohieddin, Defence Minister Shamseddin Badran and some other ministers proposed a number of measures for remedying the country's economic difficulties at the expense of the working people.

The remnants of the exploiter classes, especially in the rural areas, the bureaucratic elements in the machinery of government, some of the officers belonging to the privileged classes of society, the reactionary Moslem clergy—all these people considered the situation favourable for restoration of their influence and past privileges. Their hopes were kindled by the fact that the Arab Socialist Union had not yet become an effective political organisation of a socialist orientation. There was also increased imperialist pressure from without, taking the form, above all, of incessant Israeli armed provocations.

The Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Roz El-Youssef* wrote that there were hundreds of people in Egypt "occupying key posts and paying lip service to socialism while secretly sneering at it and sabotaging its construction. Since there are a lot of such people everywhere, they create a barrier in the path of socialism, and given a chance to come out in the open they will become a powerful reserve force of the counter-revolution."

Mahmud Amin el-Alyam, a prominent politician, stated that "demonstrations are over, but people are waiting and watching. Unless the revolutionary leadership takes active political steps the effect of the reactionary and imperialist forces will be disastrous."

The government of the UAR under these circumstances focused primary attention on reorganising and restoring the

fighting strength of the armed forces as quickly as possible, as well as strengthening the home front.

On the whole, in the handling of these problems, a class approach was used, the correctness of which had been recognised in the course of previous socio-economic reform measures. In the army sons of workers and peasants began to take the place of officers who had discredited themselves. Military leaders of progressive revolutionary views were promoted to high ranks in the army. Steps were taken to make a more effective study and draw on the rich experience of the Soviet Union's armed forces.

In the field of economics a firm line was taken towards the consistent introduction of planning principles, the strengthening of the state and co-operative sectors and continuation of industrialisation with incentives for stimulating production, greater effectiveness of investments and improvement of all economic activity by the state. The members of the national leadership (Z. Mohieddin and some others) who stood for a cut-back in the anti-capitalist state sector, for encouragement of private capital and expansion of economic relations with the imperialist states, were removed from the government which Nasser formed on March 20, 1968.

The March 30 Programme which was shortly afterwards announced by President Nasser, expressed the determination of the government and the Arab Socialist Union to follow the road of national independence and social progress. The Programme envisaged the normalisation and reorganisation of the government and administrative agencies, the building of a modern state based on democracy from top to bottom, the all-round development of industry and agriculture, full employment, a higher material and cultural level of the population, closer co-operation between the people and the army, encouragement of the youth and workers' movements, etc. The policy aimed at close co-operation with the socialist and Arab countries and at enhancing the leading role of the ASU was reaffirmed. The centre of attention, the President said, should be shifted from the administrative agencies to the Arab Socialist Union, which was to be reorganised on an elective basis from top to bottom.



Later the Egyptian press, commenting on this reorganisation, pointed out that it was occasioned by the fact that the ASU from the very outset had lacked a clear-cut structure. In particular, its statutory requirements were infringed, and the functions of the ASU and the various executive and legislative agencies were not defined and delimited. Difficulties, therefore, arose immediately in the relationships between the ASU and these agencies, as well as the various elements within the political organisation itself.

Representation in the ASU of workers and peasants was at that time less than the Statute provided for, that is, less than 50 per cent. This was due to the inaccurate definition of the categories "worker" and "peasant". Their too broad interpretation in many cases, both in the town and countryside, led to workers and peasants being represented by middle-class elements, with the natural result that the workers and peasants, as genuine representatives of the broad masses, were unable to express their will and wishes.

This state of affairs was acknowledged by the Chairman of the ASU, G. A. Nasser, in his speech on May 1, 1968. "The previous definition allowed many big landowners, the national bourgeoisie and salaried workers to be numbered among workers."

The March 30 Programme was warmly supported by the workers, peasants and intellectuals. At their meetings they declared support for the revolutionary leadership of Egypt and the proposed political and economic reforms aimed at eliminating the consequences of Israeli aggression and ensuring the country's development towards socialism.

Of the 7,300,000 Egyptians who voted in the referendum of May 2, 1968, over 99.98 per cent approved the March 30 Programme.

Approval of the Programme undoubtedly marked a new stage in the July 1952 Revolution—the stage of reliance on worker and peasant backing.

On May 9, 1968, President Nasser endorsed the Programme and the Statute of the Arab Socialist Union.

The ASU, says the Programme, is the socialist vanguard, which leads the masses of the people and expresses their will, struggles to carry out a socialist revolution as a revo-

lution of the working people, struggles for a healthy democracy providing for 50 per cent representation of workers and peasants in all political and mass organisations, for vesting state power in elected bodies, for promoting the trade-union and co-operative movements, collective leadership, criticism and self-criticism.

Under the new Statute, class forces in the ASU are to be brought into proper correlation in favour of the workers and peasants, whose class interests the revolutionary adherents of socialism are called upon to express. This guideline has led to an acute sharpening of the struggle in the country for assertion of the rights of the workers and peasants in the Arab Socialist Union.

Dealing with this subject, Doctor Ibrahim Sa'ad ed-Din wrote in May 1968 that in Egypt "the struggle is stiffening between those who defend democracy of the working people and insist on the workers and peasants playing a decisive role in the development of our society, and those who maintain that the workers and peasants are incapable of governing the country and that it is useless to give workers seats in administrative councils, that it is a mistake to have 80 per cent of co-operative board members persons who own no more than 5 feddans of land."

The sharpening of the class struggle was revealed also during the ideological controversy within the Arab Socialist Union following publication of the March 30 Programme. This controversy, in effect, was a resumption of the discussion concerning definition of the concepts "worker" and "peasant", which went back as far as 1963.

Addressing workers at Kafr Ed-Dawar in May 1968 President Nasser admitted that owing to the broad definition of the categories of "worker" and "peasant" during the founding of the ASU in 1963 the interests of the workers and peasants were infringed. He suggested the following definition as being more fair: A "peasant" is one who lives in the country, owns no more than 10 feddans of land, and works it himself, and for whom farming is his means of livelihood. Thus, rich peasants, by and large, are not included in those categories of the population which form the mainstay of the new regime. The definition of the category of "worker" was likewise clarified.



The right to call himself a "worker" belongs to any Egyptian who is engaged in manual or mental work in industry, agriculture (for example, a worker on a state farm) or in the service industries and lives on his earnings. This cannot apply to graduates of universities or military schools. Exceptions are made only in the case of those who come from working-class families, have received a higher education and have remained members of a workers' trade union. It should be pointed out that it was on the basis of this interpretation that some former ministers in Egyptian government, bank directors and other such people were later elected to the Central Committee of the ASU under the "worker" bracket.

The principle of democratic centralism, namely, election of all governing bodies, minority bowing to the will of the majority, etc., was introduced for the first time under the Statute in the organisations of the ASU.

In accordance with the new Statute, elections were held to all governing bodies of the Union. At the National Congress of the ASU held in September 1968 important decisions were passed, mobilising Egyptians to the task of eliminating the consequences of Israeli aggression and developing the revolution of July 1952. The Congress decisions emphasised that "a showdown with the enemy is inevitable, and so is our victory in it". And further: "Defence of our socialist system is an inseparable part of the struggle for the common destinies of the Arabs."

The Congress elected a Central Committee of the ASU at whose meeting a nine-man Supreme Executive Committee was elected by secret ballot.

In October 1968 departments and a secretariat were organised under the Central Committee of the ASU. Each department was in the charge of a Central Committee secretary.

Sessions of the National Congress of the Arab Socialist Union were held in March and July 1969 which confirmed the policy of the Egyptian Government aimed at eliminating the consequences of the June 1967 aggression. Egyptian statesmen and politicians as well as the general public marked the Lenin Centenary on a wide scale. A commemoration meeting was held on April 8, 1970 at the ASU palace in

Cairo. The same day an anniversary evening was held by the Egyptian trade unions. Lenin anniversary evenings were held also in other towns.

On June 29, 1970, G. Nasser paid a friendly visit to the Soviet Union which lasted until July 17. In the course of an exchange of views the two sides confirmed the existence of a common view on the situation in the Middle East. They discussed a wide range of questions concerning various aspects of bilateral co-operation between the USSR and the UAR and between the CPSU and the ASU.

On July 23, 1970, on the eighteenth anniversary of the July 1952 Revolution, the Fourth Session of the ASU National Congress was opened. The session was addressed by G. Nasser, President of the UAR and Chairman of the ASU.

Despite the continued aggression by Israel, he pointed out, the Egyptian people had achieved considerable progress both in industrial and agricultural output and in rearmament and increased fighting efficiency of the army.

"I am glad to inform the Congress delegates," he said, "that our country's great project, one of the fronts of our people's struggle—the Aswan High Dam—has been successfully completed. We have achieved considerable success also on the front of the struggle against Israeli aggression. These achievements of our people on the front of construction and the front of defence against aggression are inseparable from the fraternal assistance rendered by the Soviet Union."

A special statement adopted by the Congress says: "We remember everything the Soviet Union has done to help us and support us in all fields. The memory of this friendly and just position of the Soviet Union will remain forever in the minds of the broad masses of our Arab people, who are loyal in friendship. It will be handed down from generation to generation as the ideal of relationships between states and peoples."

The Congress resolutions stressed the need for further strengthening the armed forces and the national defence units, stepping up production, stimulating the activities of the primary units of the ASU, the youth and women's organisations, etc.



The Congress approved the President's motion for a temporary three-month ceasefire in the Suez Canal zone for resumption of the mission of the UN special representative.

Cairo's appeal for peace in the Middle East had wide repercussions. Many Arab countries approved the UAR's initiative.

On September 28, 1970, the peoples of the UAR and other Arab countries suffered a great loss—the sudden death of President Nasser. Forty days' national mourning was proclaimed in the country.

On October 15, a referendum was held in the UAR as a result of which Nasser's associate, Anwar Sadat, was elected President. In the course of the election campaign he received the wide support of the Egyptian trade unions, the peasantry, intellectuals, students and numerous social organisations.

At the Fifth Session of the Congress, which opened on November 13, President Anwar Sadat was elected Chairman of the ASU.

In his speech at the Fifth Session of the Congress A. Sadat said: "Guided by the principles and behests of Gamal Abdel Nasser, we shall follow the road of liberty, socialism and unity."

The attitude of Egypt's new leaders showed a constructive approach to the problem of a political settlement in the Middle East. In November 1970 the UAR prolonged the ceasefire deadline by another three months.

On the invitation of President Sadat President N.V. Podgorny, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, paid an official visit to the UAR on January 13, 1971. Podgorny and his party attended the celebrations held in the UAR on the occasion of the completion and launching of the Aswan High Dam hydroelectric power complex.

The policy of Egypt's new leaders aimed at the construction of socialism roused the hatred of the internal and external reactionaries. In March 1971 the Egyptian newspaper *Akhbar al-Yaoum* renewed its attacks on the state sector, demanding that the state and the ASU should not interfere in production. These attacks were strongly rebuffed in the columns of another newspaper *Al-Goumhuriya*.

A second line of attacks upon Egypt's revolutionary regime was the demand that the private sector be allowed within the state sector on the grounds that mobilisation of internal accumulation was essential for the development of production. Doctor Lutfi Abdel Azim in the magazine *Al-Ahram al-Iqtisadi* for January 15, 1971 demanded that 50 per cent of the shares of the state companies be placed at the disposal of the private sector. What he really demanded was that the shares of the state-sector companies be sold to holders of capital, that is, to the national bourgeoisie. The experience of Egypt and other developing countries has shown that the work of the mixed state and private enterprises was greatly hampered compared with that of the state enterprises. It was this that had induced Egypt to fully nationalise the mixed companies.

At the same time there was a sharpening of the class struggle in the Egyptian countryside, where, in the course of the reform, the rich peasants and bourgeoisified landowners had strengthened their positions.

Expressing the interests of these strata, the Chairman of the Agricultural Commission of Parliament Saad Samman introduced a bill in Egypt's supreme legislative body under which the owners of up to 3 feddans were to be given the right to evict tenants (which was essentially at variance with the reform that was being carried out in the country); poor peasants could receive bank loans only with the consent of the landowner (which made the former completely dependent upon the latter), and, finally, it recommended that a judge be introduced into the Commission on Agrarian Conflicts. The introduction of this bill showed how strong the reactionaries were in Egypt. This was borne out also by the decision of the Supreme Court giving priority on purchase of state lands to owners of adjacent lots.

The foreign policy acts as well as the internal measures of Egypt's new leaders met with resistance on the part of the reactionaries.

On April 17, 1971, in the Libyan town of Benghazi, President A. Sadat of Egypt, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Libya M. Qadhafi, and President of Syria H. Assad signed an agreement for a Federation of Arab Republics.



The idea of such a federation was definitely opposed by a number of members of the Supreme Executive of the ASU, ministers and MPs. However, the policy of A. Sadat and other Egyptian leaders aimed at the creation of a Federation of Arab Republics was supported by mass demonstrations of Egyptian workers on May 14 and 15 expressing the desire for the continued fulfilment of the behests of late President Nasser.

This was borne out also by the results of the re-elections in the organisations of the ASU in June-July, in the National Assembly in October-November and in the trade unions, professional associations and trade-union federations. These elections were an important school of political education for the masses.

On May 25, 1971, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and Member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU, N. V. Podgorny paid a three-day visit to Cairo on the invitation of the President of Egypt and Chairman of the ASU. Prompted by a desire to consolidate the traditional relations of friendship between the two states and peoples, the two sides decided to conclude a Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation Between the USSR and the UAR.

The USSR and the UAR solemnly declared that "there will always exist inviolable friendship between the two countries and their peoples".

The Treaty states that the USSR, as a socialist state, and the UAR, whose objective is a socialist reorganisation of society, will co-operate in securing the further development of their peoples' social and economic gains.

On July 23, 1971, on the occasion of the nineteenth anniversary of the July 1952 Revolution, a session of the National Congress of the Arab Socialist Union opened in Cairo. It was attended by some 1,900 members of the ASU and by a delegation from the CPSU led by Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU B. N. Ponomarev.

President Sadat was unanimously elected Chairman of the ASU and Chairman of its National Congress.

The delegates focused their discussion on the Programme of National Action for the coming period, at least until the year 1983. The Programme proposed by President Anwar

Sadat provides for the doubling of the national income over a period of ten years, the priority growth of the state sector as the basis of socialist development, and the raising of the level of political consciousness among the population. The ASU urged that the nature of Zionist aggression be brought home to the public and that those who supported it be exposed, and that the programme for doubling the national income and participation of the masses in fulfilment of the development plans be made clear to them. The production committees of the ASU and the meetings of its organisations were to become schools for the training of cadres. They were also to become bodies supervising fulfilment of the economic plans. Education of the working people in the spirit of patriotism was a major task of the ASU. In the fulfilment of the Programme of National Action an important role was to be played by the trade-union organisations and the youth and women's movements.

The Congress Declaration states that the new document is an important supplement to the 1962 National Charter and to the Programme of March 30, 1968, which are orientated at the construction of socialism in Egypt.

The delegation of the CPSU, which was in Egypt from July 20 to 30, 1971, recognised in the course of talks with representatives of the ASU the great importance of the Programme of National Action approved by the National Congress, which reflects the tasks confronting Egypt in the phase of the anti-imperialist, national democratic revolution. Its successful implementation by Egypt's working people under the leadership of the ASU will open up to the country new favourable prospects for development along the chosen path of anti-imperialist struggle, national independence and social progress.

On September 1, 1971, a nation-wide vote was taken in Egypt, Libya and Syria approving the Constitution of the Federation of Arab Republics. On September 6, it was announced that the UAR would henceforth be called the Arab Republic of Egypt (ARE). As a result of the referendum the new Constitution was endorsed on September 11, 1971. Clause 1 of the Constitution states that "the Arab Republic of Egypt is a state with a democratic, socialist system founded on a union of all the forces of the working people. The



Egyptian people are part of the Arab nation striving towards its unity". The clause goes on to say that work is the right and duty of and a matter of honour for the working people of Egypt.

Under the Constitution, property in Egypt is controlled and safeguarded by the state and is allowed in three forms: (1) state property or national property represented by the public sector, which is the guiding force in the development of the national economy. This sector embraces the natural resources and basic branches of industry, the public services, banks, insurance companies, import, export, the wholesale trade and most of the medium-sized manufacturing industries; (2) co-operative property—the property of individual bodies. Their forms of leadership and self-government are established by law; (3) private property, represented by "non-exploiter" capital used in the interest of the national economy, but not entering "into conflict with the general welfare of the people in the course of its employment".

Under Clause 33 public-sector capital is sacrosanct and safeguarding it is the duty of every citizen. Citizens must safeguard and promote the property of the people, regarded as the foundation of the socialist system, the source of the people's well-being.

Between October 27 and November 3 elections were held to the National Assembly of Egypt. Of the 1,160 candidates 338 deputies were elected to parliament and 22 deputies appointed by presidential decree.

Speaking at the opening of the National Assembly on November 11 President Sadat stressed once more that "Our friend, the great Soviet Union, has rendered us inestimable assistance in strengthening our military power. In our hour of need and trial the Soviet Union proved that it was our most sincere friend. I declare with full responsibility that but for the vitally important aid of the Soviet Union in restoring our armed forces the enemy would have retained absolute military superiority gained after the June 1967 aggression."

On January 16, 1972 the Central Committee of the ASU approved the appointment of Azis Sidki as Prime Minister.

At a meeting with representatives of political, trade union and other Egyptian mass organisations on January 26,

1972, President Sadat dwelt on the events connected with the recent demonstrations by Cairo students. Referring to the "unruly behaviour" of many of them, the President said that there were certain currents in the student movement whose representatives were trying to undermine the home front.

The extraordinary session of the ASU National Congress in February discussed current problems facing the country and adopted a resolution expressing the desire of the party and the Egyptian people to follow the path of progressive social transformation, a united home front and joint Arab action, the strengthening of friendship with the socialist countries in the struggle to remove the continuing Israeli aggression.

However, by that time Right-wing forces had become active. In February 1972 the Ministry of Internal Affairs repealed the law barring from political activity some 12,000 people whose interests had been impinged upon by the revolutionary laws of the late President Nasser. In April Parliament returned their confiscated property to over 1,200 people, to the maximum permitted by the law. Speaking in the National Assembly on May 14, President Sadat drew attention to attempts to step up the "psychological war" intended to undermine friendly relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union.

However, despite this and other statements, throughout 1972 the Egyptian leadership continued to make more and more concessions to Right-wing extreme nationalist forces.

On June 8, diplomatic relations were restored with the Federal Republic of Germany, which had been broken off in 1965, and the same day the FRG granted Egypt a loan of DM150 million for the construction of a pipeline from Suez to Alexandria.

In June Parliament reinstated the army officers cashiered for political reasons before the events of May 14, 1971, granted students of the Al-Azhar Theological University deferment of call-up to the age of thirty (instead of the 27 as in other universities) and passed a law protecting state and government property and assets and also a new law concerning deputies. According to the latter, a deputy to the National Council must be an Egyptian subject for at



least thirty years, be born of an Egyptian father able to read and write and be an active member of the ASU. The attempt by deputies to include a point barring from parliament persons affected by laws on agrarian reform, nationalisation, etc., was defeated when put to the vote. Parliament decided that such persons now have the right to play an active part in political life and that the slogan of the present stage of the country's development should be "Love and co-operation between all sons of the Homeland".

Shortly after, President Sadat announced that the mission of the Soviet technicians invited to Egypt by the Government expired on July 17. He spoke in glowing terms of the enormous help the USSR had rendered and declared that it was his intention that the friendship between the two countries on the basis of the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation of May 1971 should continue.

An Egyptian delegation headed by Premier Sidki visited the USSR, October 16-18, 1972. The two sides declared that Soviet-Egyptian friendship is permanent and based on the common goals of the Egyptian and Soviet peoples to achieve universal peace, prosperity, and social justice for both friendly peoples, that the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation is a foundation for further strengthening and deepening the friendly links and co-operation between Egypt and the Soviet Union.

Referring to the results of the visit, Premier Sidki said at a joint meeting of the ASU Central Committee and the ASU deputies in Parliament on October 26: "Relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union are founded on firm, unshakeable principles to which both we Egyptians and the Soviet Union adhere, and which serve as a basis for genuine friendship between our peoples. These fundamental principles include struggle with imperialism, for socialism and the right of peoples to liberation."

The regearing of the Egyptian economy to a war footing continued throughout 1972. The annual economic growth rate was to be 6 per cent as compared with the average of 5 per cent for the years 1967-1971.

Egypt's development is taking place under the difficult conditions of continued Israeli aggression. The constant dan-

ger of intrigue and plotting by external and internal reaction makes it essential for the working class to exercise a high degree of vigilance, organisation and activity.

The working masses of Egypt support their government's policy aimed at drawing the working people into the job of managing and controlling the vital state enterprises, financial and other agencies. Simultaneously the struggle is continuing against the reactionary elements and against abuses of power. This struggle is essentially a class struggle. Its successes are part of the process of democratisation of society and further socio-economic reforms in the country.

In the beginning of 1973, in view of the exacerbation of the political situation at home and the continued Israeli aggression President Sadat took office as Premier of the new government of Egypt. Shortly afterwards, he assumed powers as military Governor General. In October, hostilities resumed in the Middle East.

The achievements of the Egyptian people are part and parcel of the achievements of the Arab national liberation movement as a whole. Despite all the difficulties in the complicated process of the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab countries, here, too, the balance of forces tipped in favour of peace and socialism. In the life of several Arab countries the role of the popular masses and their organisations standing guard over the revolutionary gains and trying to extend them has increased. A Progressive Front was formed in Syria, the Communist Party was made legal in Lebanon, a front of progressive forces is being consolidated in Iraq, and such political organisations as the National Front in the Yemeni People's Democratic Republic and the ASU in Egypt that are in office are strengthening their position.

As for those Arab countries that are developing spontaneously along the capitalist path, the facts of present-day reality testify to the futility of any attempts at economic planning and to the great difficulties that stand in the way of these countries' industrialisation. Let us take, for example, Morocco. After winning political independence in 1956 the feudalists and landowners and the comprador bourgeoisie led the country along the capitalist path.

"The general orientation imposed upon the country after



winning independence," Ali Yata, General Secretary of the Moroccan Party of Liberation and Socialism, wrote at the end of 1970, "was determined by the constant and ever more clearly and strongly pressed striving to move away from democracy, to cast aside the forces that strove towards progress both in the social, economic and cultural fields and in the anti-imperialist struggle."<sup>1</sup>

The rulers of Morocco embarked on a policy of widely attracting foreign capital and mobilising internal private accumulation to finance economic development. For this purpose an Investment Code, heavily weighted in favour of foreign investors, was adopted in September 1958, which established important priorities for a number of extractive and manufacturing industries. The Code's basic propositions were confirmed and elaborated in January and December 1960.

The Code provides for a reduction or even lifting of import duties on industrial equipment and considerable taxation relief for newly built enterprises and extensions. Foreign capital is guaranteed against uncompensated nationalisation or liquidation of enterprises. Capital and profits may be transferred abroad without restriction. Formulating the government's policy in regard to foreign capital, the former Minister of Economic Affairs declared in 1962: "The thing is to have the sector of French origin grow into the national life. . . . Your modern enterprises," the Minister continued, addressing foreign businessmen, "still feel themselves foreigners in Morocco. We want them to feel at home here. That is what the process of Moroccanisation is about."

To mobilise national private capital to help develop material production, first and foremost industry, a state National Investment Fund (NIF) was established in December 1961.

In order to attract private capital the Moroccan Government virtually abandons the idea of nationalisation of private property when it is to the detriment of its owners. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said in 1962 that nationalisation in Morocco was possible only as a result of mutual agreement between the parties concerned and detailed negotiations. In

fact, that was how nationalisation of the railways and power stations, for instance, was carried out in 1963. The Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas, principal owner of the railway network and power stations of Morocco, received by way of compensation a sum four times in excess of the market value of the nationalised property.

The policy based on foreign and national private capital, however, failed to bring the expected prosperity. The failure of this policy was most clearly revealed precisely in the sphere of capital investments. The growth of investments envisaged in the various government plans was achieved in no single branch of the national economy. In 1961 the share of national accumulation in the sum total of investments dropped by 20 per cent and for the first time since 1956 there was a reduction in bank deposits abroad and convertible currency reserves. Moreover, in 1961 and 1962 the volume of investments in plant equipment was lower than the depreciation fund required for renewals and replacements of machinery in operation (Fr. 36,700 million against Fr. 43,000 million). In other words, investments at the time in some branches were accompanied by a curtailment of production in others, that is to say, the country's industrial potential, not only did not increase, but revealed even a tendency to decline. The parliamentary opposition group of the National Union of Popular Forces stated in its report that Morocco in 1962 was still more underdeveloped than it was in 1960 and was on the way towards absolute underdevelopment.

All this induced the rulers of Morocco to take the path of greater state interference in the economy. The main channels through which state regulation and state investments in industry were carried out were the various branch and interbranch boards. With the exception of the mining and marketing of phosphates, which were controlled by the Office Chérifien des Phosphates since 1920, the state sector in Morocco grew largely as a result of the government buying up the shares of already existing companies and participation of the state in establishing new or extending old societies and enterprises. By 1963-64 the state sector held a prominent position in Moroccan industry. The Bureau de Recherches et de Participations Minières held shares

<sup>1</sup> *World Marxist Review*, 1970, No. 12.



in 34 mining companies with a capital totalling DH250 million, of which the share of the state was DH77.6 million or about 31 per cent. Another state organisation owned 47 per cent of the capital of nine big companies in the manufacturing industry, etc.

July 1, 1959 saw the establishment of the State Bank of Morocco, a network of Popular Banks controlled by the state Caisse Centrale des Banques Populaires, and the Banque National de Développement Economique with a capital of DH30 million, of which half belongs to the state.

Through these and other state and mixed agencies the government is attempting to exercise a more active influence on the economic development of the country. State interference in the economy yields definite positive results. This is especially noticeable in the case of industry.

The share of industry in the gross national product of Morocco has risen to 20 per cent.

One form of state regulation of the economy is the drafting of various development plans. With foreign capital still predominating in the key industries, however, and with the weakness of the state sector these plans meet with serious difficulties.

A five-year plan of economic development was adopted in 1960 designed to bring about profound structural changes in the economy and social composition of the population. In the sphere of industrial development the plan envisaged the establishment and extension of the ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy and the chemical industry, which, in turn, were to serve as a basis for developing various branches of the manufacturing industry. The aim was to provide the greatest possible facilities for the processing of mineral and agricultural raw materials on the spot and do away with the need for importing consumer goods. Industrial production during the five-year period was planned to show an increase of 61 per cent by 1965. Overall industrial output was to amount to over 30 per cent of the gross national product.

None of the basic plan targets, however, was achieved. The actual volume of investments in the national economy during 1960-64 amounted to only 70 per cent of the planned level, and the gross national product rose by 3.5 per

cent a year instead of the planned 7 per cent. The number of workers and other employees in the manufacturing industry increased by 4,000 a year instead of the planned 10,000. Characteristically, the Moroccan Government, while failing to report fulfilment figures under the five-year plan, approved a new plan covering a period of three years from 1965 to 1967.

This plan provides for investments to the amount of DH3,480 million. By 1967, however, this plan was only half fulfilled. One reason for this was the severe droughts of 1966 and 1967.

As we see, no single plan has been fulfilled. A favourable aspect of the period in which the five-year and three-year plans were operative was the extension and consolidation of the state sector in the country's economy. Its share in investments during 1960 to 1966 rose from 38 to 54 per cent.

The main reason why plans in Morocco have not been fulfilled is due to the fact that the economic policy pursued by the ruling circles runs counter to the aims and objectives proclaimed in those plans. Morocco's economic policy aims at providing the greatest possible inducements for private capital, above all foreign capital, and at cementing a union with the monopolies, under which the state sector would merely be a supplement to private enterprise, a means of stimulating it. It is noteworthy that in recent years no less than one-third of the investment budget is covered by foreign loans, chiefly by state loans received from the USA. Under the circumstances one can hardly expect success in economic planning, inasmuch as plan fulfilment is largely dependent on the will of private enterprise. It is worth noting that in 1970 50 per cent of Morocco's industrial potential was controlled by French monopolies.

Another serious flaw in Moroccan plans is that the key problems of economic development are treated in them only in the technical aspect. Experience, on the other hand, conclusively proves that the basic problems of economic growth in the developing countries cannot be solved in the context of even the most well-considered and expert technical recommendations, since the obsolete socio-economic structure of society as a whole is an obstacle to their solu-



tion. Without a drastic break-up of this structure inherited from colonialism with strong feudal survivals it is impossible to satisfactorily solve even separate, particular problems of economic development.

The Moroccan Government placed great hopes on the new five-year plan (1968-1972). During its drafting attempts were made to take into account the mistakes of the previous plans of economic development. The fact that this plan was to be financed to the extent of 35 per cent by inflow of funds from outside sources (about DH2,000 million) was a warning sign however. State investments were to amount to DH1,010 million out of a total sum of DH5,050 million (about one thousand million dollars).

Morocco's national debt rose to 1,200 million dollars in 1970, or half the country's GNP. There were almost 900,000 unemployed and prices of consumer goods continued to rise.

In 1972 two-thirds of the funds received from abroad went to pay the country's foreign debts.

The government's economic development programme for Morocco for the period 1973-1974 provides for "Moroccanisation" of the economy and for increasing employment. It is planned to bring up the share of national capital in mixed companies to 51 per cent, and increase to two-thirds the number of Moroccan nationals on the company boards.

In the conditions of Morocco, as in those of other Maghreb countries, the implementation of radical agrarian reforms is of paramount importance for the successful remodelling of the economy's colonial structure. But least of all in this field have any changes occurred since the proclamation of independence.

As in the period of colonialism, the bulk of the peasantry is still land-starved, as a result of which impoverishment of the masses of the rural population is on the increase. The gulf between modern agricultural production and backward traditional methods of farming of the millions of the Moroccan peasants and tenants is not only not narrowing, but becoming wider still.

The draft of an agrarian reform worked out in Morocco does not provide for serious changes in the existing system of agrarian relationships, for liquidation of the colonial and semi-feudal structure of agriculture or the abolition

of feudal property in land. The foreign land holdings which the state is gradually taking over do not fall into the hands of the land-starved peasants, but are bought up by the feudalists and the local bourgeoisie and continue to serve as a means of enrichment for the upper classes of Moroccan society. The unsettled agrarian question, standing as it does in the way of development of the country's productive forces, is perhaps the most striking illustration of the political influence which feudal circles and the big commercial and money-lending bourgeoisie today exercise in Morocco.

It would be a mistake, however, to interpret the absence of any appreciable progress in the economic structure of present-day Morocco as an absence of any kind of progress in the social sphere as well. During the years of independence positive results have been achieved in the development of education and the general cultural level of the population. Measures have been taken to improve social legislation and the system of public health and to extend housing construction. However, as progressive Moroccan circles point out, these measures could be far more effective if the country's rulers adopted a course aimed at radical socio-economic reforms.

Mention should be made of the Moroccan Government's striving to diminish the country's foreign trade and financial dependence on France by expanding its economic ties with other countries and diversifying its foreign trade. In particular, some development is to be noted in Morocco's economic ties with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. This striving, however, meets with constant and stubborn resistance on the part of big foreign capital, which continues to exercise an important influence on this country's development.

On the whole, in their assessment of the 20-year period of Morocco's development under conditions of political independence, Moroccan progressives describe it as a grave crisis, which has "affected the economy, finances, and the social and political life of the country". Suffice it to note that the average growth of incomes for the period 1960-1969 was a mere 0.4 per cent. From the political point of view, said Ali Yata, the prominent Moroccan public figure, this crisis signifies that the country had been living, since receiving



independence, on the reserves of capitalist accumulation inherited from the protectorate epoch and that these reserves were now exhausted. Ali Yata stressed that the only lesson to be drawn from the general crisis in which Morocco found itself was that this wrong, anti-national and anti-popular course had to be abandoned for a path of non-capitalist development, a path towards socialism.

#### AGRARIAN REFORM AND CO-OPERATIVE ORGANISATION OF THE PEASANTRY

Another thing required for the complete victory of socialism is the socialisation of the means of production of the small producers. The economy of a country that is developing along socialist lines cannot remain for long based on two antipodes. The contradiction between big state-owned industry of a socialist orientation and small-scale scattered agriculture is bound to lead to disproportion in the national economy. This contradiction, as the experience of the socialist countries has shown, can be overcome only by way of transforming small-scale peasant farming into large-scale collective, co-operative farming capable of satisfying the population's demand for food products and industry's demand for raw materials. This is essential also for raising the living standard of the people, first and foremost of the peasants themselves.

The ideas underlying Lenin's co-operative plan, carried out for the first time in history in the USSR, are as follows. First, the nature of co-operation under the conditions of the dictatorship of the people is radically different from that under capitalism. In the new conditions co-operation is a way of passing over to collective forms of farming that is most accessible, intelligible and profitable to the millions of the peasantry. The merging of the private interests of the peasantry with those of the state at large is best secured in the co-operatives. Second, co-operative organisation of the peasantry should be carried out in successive, gradual stages, beginning with the most simple supply and marketing forms of co-operation. Third, co-operative organisation can be successful only if the principle of voluntary membership of the peasants in the various forms of co-operation

is rigidly adhered to. Lenin recommended taking lessons from the peasants in how to adopt a better system and being careful to avoid bossing. Only under these conditions, he emphasised, could the new, socialist mode of production succeed in agriculture. At the same time co-operative organisation of the peasants, he stressed, could not be carried out spontaneously, left to take its own course. The thing had to be arranged politically in such a way that co-operation would not only always offer certain advantages, but that these advantages should be of a purely material nature.

The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries shows that the transformation of agriculture by way of voluntary co-operation is a profound revolutionary change sponsored by the people's state with the active participation of the peasants. Co-operative organisation of the peasants creates a socialist base in agriculture, with the peasants going over to a collective, socialist system of farming, and the rich peasants—that last and most numerous class of exploiters—being eliminated. This solves the problem of “who will win” in favour of socialism in this or that country which has chosen the socialist path of development. The socialist way of life, which was a leading form at the beginning of the transition period, now becomes the fully predominant form. An integrated socialist system of economy takes shape founded on social property in the form of state, people's property and in the form of co-operative, group property. Exploitation of man by man and the causes that beget it are done away with.

“The path traversed by the Soviet peasantry,” said Mohammed Said Taleb, Minister of Agriculture and Land Reform of the Syrian Arab Republic, addressing the Third Congress of Soviet Collective Farmers in November 1969, “commands the attention of millions throughout the world, who regard it as the only way of overcoming backwardness and exploitation, the way of building a future based on justice, liberty and peace.”

The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries in handling the agrarian and peasant question is undoubtedly taken into consideration by the Arab countries in carrying out land reforms. The agrarian reform is being carried



out most consistently in the Arab countries of socialist orientation—Syria, Iraq, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Algeria and Egypt.

In the countries that are developing spontaneously along the path of capitalism agrarian reforms are proceeding at an extremely slow pace. These reforms, taken together with measures to raise the level of agrotechnical practices in agriculture, to organise credit, marketing, and so on, are essentially a set of measures aimed at gradually turning the semi-feudal economy into a capitalist economy.

Considerable progress has been achieved in the Arab Republic of Egypt, where soon after the July 1952 Revolution Law No. 178 dated September 9 on land reform was passed. It should be noted that the agrarian reform bill during its preparatory stages was opposed by the Wafd Party, a bourgeois-landowner nationalist party widely known in Egypt before the revolution, whose spokesmen declared that the proposed reform went against religion and the Constitution, which proclaimed "the sanctity of private property".

Under the land reform law maximum holdings were set at 200 feddans. In addition, the landholder had a right to share a further 100 feddans among the members of his family. Land in excess of the fixed maximum was subject to compensated appropriation and distribution among the landless and land-hungry peasants. The peasant who received land had to pay a sum equal to the amount of compensation due to the landowner (seventy times the amount of the land tax plus the cost of structures, tree plantings, farming implements, etc.) and to refund the major expenses incurred in implementing the agrarian reform (amounting to 15 per cent of the compensation sum). Compensation payments for the land were to be made by the peasants over a period of 30 years in equal annual instalments. Under the reform the minimum wage for agricultural labourers was fixed at 18 kurush a day, and they were allowed to organise trade unions.

The Agrarian Reform Law provided for the organisation of agricultural co-operatives of peasants who had received land. The co-operatives were to help their members buy graded seed, fertilisers, pedigree livestock and agricul-

tural machines. They were to receive and distribute agricultural credits, keep account of compensation payments, etc.

During the first years of the Agrarian Reform Law's enforcement Egyptian landowners sold off about 145,000 feddans at market prices. Some 178,000 feddans were confiscated from members of the royal dynasty, which the revolution had done away with, and made over to the Supreme Agrarian Reform Committee (in 1960 reorganised into the National Agrarian Reform Organisation). Another 127,000 feddans were confiscated from other categories of big landowners. According to the newspaper *Al-Ahram*, by July 1961 the Agrarian Reform Law had been applied to an area of 450,000 feddans, of which 294,000 feddans had been distributed by way of compensation payments or bought by the peasants at market prices. The total number of peasants who had benefited directly by the land redistribution reached at that time the figure of 110,000.

The enforcement of the agrarian reform, however, met with great difficulties. President Nasser said in July 1961 that despite the adoption of laws restricting landholding to 300 feddans, he knew a landowner's family which still owned 3,000 feddans, that is, ten times more than the fixed limit, and who looked upon the peasants as its slaves. He cited numerous instances in which rent rates, minimum wages for farm labourers, etc., laid down in the 1952 Law had been contravened. All this led to discontent among the Egyptian peasantry. The Left forces demanded a reduction of the landholding maximum to 50 feddans and confiscation without compensation of lands and other means of production. They demanded better rental terms and strict observance of the fixed minimum of wages for farm labourers, etc.

The President's decree of July 25, 1961 introduced further changes in the Agrarian Reform Law of 1952. The maximum holding of a landowner's family (the landowner, his wife and children) was fixed at 100 feddans (42 hectares). Simultaneously, a ban was placed on leases of lots exceeding 50 feddans.

The surplus of land over and above the maximum was estimated at 300,000 feddans in the case of 1,892 big land-



owners. In addition, religious bodies by that time had sold 101,000 feddans of Waqf lands to the National Agrarian Reform Organisation. A presidential decree was issued in December 1961 abolishing foreign landholdings in Egypt. Another 150,000 feddans of foreign-owned Egyptian land were to be taken over and distributed among the peasants.

Thus, by April 1963 the total area of lands covered by the agrarian reform, according to *Al-Ahram*, was estimated at one million feddans, being about 17 per cent of all the country's cultivated lands. By the beginning of the 1967 aggression 650,700 feddans had been distributed among 280,000 peasant families. In addition, by 1966 another 111,000 feddans of developed state lands had been distributed among 20,000 peasants.

The June 1967 aggression had been unable to arrest the process of socio-economic reform which had started in the Egyptian countryside.

In 1969, on President Nasser's proposal, the Agrarian Reform Law was amended: under the previously fixed maximum of 42 hectares of landholding per landowner family, the maximum holding per person was fixed as from July 23 of the same year at 21 hectares (50 feddans). This amendment will affect some 3,113 landowners and landowning families from whom about 131,000 feddans will be taken over.

According to *Al-Ahram*, towards the end of 1972 the agrarian reform in Egypt had embraced 420,000 landless and land-hungry peasant families, who had already received about one million feddans of land.

Nevertheless, the agrarian reform that is being carried out in Egypt has not solved the country's land question. In 1972 some 18 million people, or about 3.6 million families, were engaged in Egyptian agriculture. The agrarian reform, as we have seen from the foregoing figures, has embraced only 12 per cent of all peasant households. In the course of the reform there has been a considerable strengthening of the well-to-do strata of the Egyptian villages. There are still approximately 11,000 landowner families in the country possessing 50 and more feddans each. They own 940,000 feddans, or 15 per cent of the arable lands.

Under the conditions of the reform the lands taken over from the landowners or sold by the landowners themselves go first to the tenants or half-tenants of that land. Therefore, the total number of farms in the ARE has undergone little change so far. The bulk of the Egyptian peasantry in the person of its semi-proletarian and poor strata has gained little from the reform's first stages. The landless or land-poor peasantry still remains a feature of Egyptian country life.

At a session of the ASU National Congress in July 1972 President Sadat declared that despite the enormous efforts of the 1952 revolution a large number of peasants still suffered from unemployment, low incomes, illiteracy, poor food and health. In his opinion, the existing production relations would have to be changed if anything was to be done to improve conditions in rural Egypt. The compensation payments made by the peasants, right up to March 1964, were burdensome not only for the poor farms, but even for middle farms, which were desirous of receiving land.

In March 1964 a law was passed in Egypt reducing compensation payment by a further 25 per cent on lands handed over to the peasants under the agrarian reform of 1952. The peasants were also exempted from annual interest payments. The compensation payments were now merely one quarter of the original 1952 rate.

In this connection one is reminded of Lenin's famous words to the effect that "The question of compensation will serve as an immediate and infallible test of who stands for the peasants and who for the landowners, and also who is trying to desert from one side to the other. . . . On this question the divergence of interests of the peasants and the landowners is splendidly revealed."<sup>1</sup>

Under the Agrarian Reform Law of 1952 the state, as we have already mentioned above, promised to pay the former landowners compensation for the lands taken over from them in excess of the established maximum. On March 22, 1964 however, the government of Nasser, in the national interest of Egypt's development, and under pressure from the masses, who regarded the proposed compensation as

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 415.



an act of profound social injustice, issued a law by which landowners' lands coming under the agrarian reform were confiscated without compensation. Compensation payments were retained only for foreign-owned land and the lands of religious organisations.

In accordance with the Agrarian Reform Law of 1952 rent paid by share-croppers was fixed in monetary form at an amount sevenfold that of land tax, and in kind at an amount not exceeding 50 per cent of the harvest, after allowing for production costs.

In leasing land, however, the landowners demanded an advance and made the peasants work for nothing on their estates, placing the burden of joint production costs on the shoulders of the tenants, and so on. As a result the tenant paid something between the rate fixed by law and the rate the landowner wished to receive. On this score disputes and conflicts arose between the landowners and tenants which often ended in bloodshed. Between 1962 and 1963, therefore, four decrees were issued in Egypt supplementing and amending the Agrarian Reform Law of 1952. In accordance with these decrees lease contracts are now drawn up in triplicate, one copy being kept by the landowner, the other by the lessee, and the third by the local agricultural co-operative acting as arbitrator in the event of dispute between the parties. The decrees defined production costs of the landowner and the tenant, and the share of produce due to each of the parties.

On the whole, the agrarian reform of 1952 allowed the revolutionary regime in Egypt to strengthen its positions in the countryside. Out of the 1,000,000 family farms in Egyptian agriculture some 400,000 or 40 per cent are working land received under the reform. After enforcement of the existing laws the total number of these farms will reach 500,000, comprising about half of all the family farms in the country.

In accordance with the recommendations of the third session of the National Committee of the ASU held in July 1969 the reclaimed lands made available by the construction of the Aswan High Dam and comprising about 1,500,000 feddans are to be turned over, in the main, to state organisations and companies. This will mean a strengthening of

the public sector in agriculture. The large gap that existed between industry (in which the state sector accounts for about 75 per cent of the fixed capital) and agriculture (where the share of the state sector is negligible) is gradually narrowing.

The government of the ARE is giving a good deal of attention also to the problem of changing the pattern of agriculture by co-operative organisation of the farms. It should be pointed out that in the field of agrarian reform the government is guided by the concrete situation prevailing in the Egyptian countryside and rejects both the idea of capitalist development of agriculture and the ultra-Left recommendations for nationalisation of the land. The leaders of Egypt are aware that nationalisation of the land without a sufficiently sound material and technical basis is fraught with grave danger.

The government of Egypt is devoting great attention to the question of reorganising the technical basis of agriculture. It realises that this reorganisation is impossible without a radical transformation of the socio-economic structure of the Egyptian countryside, without unification of the individual peasant farms into co-operatives of all forms and stages, without extirpation of the remnants of feudalism in agriculture. In 1966 the various co-operatives in Egypt embraced about 70 per cent of the gainfully employed rural population. There were 4,600 co-operatives in the Egyptian countryside.

After the 1967 aggression the local units of the Arab Socialist Union and the local state agencies carefully studied the experience and prospects of development of the co-operative movement in Egypt.

In 1969 there were about 2,300,000 co-operative-organised peasants in Egypt compared with 500,000 in 1952. The capital of the agricultural co-operatives reached £E2,700,000 as against £E700,000 in 1952. Commodity circulation in 1969 totalled over £E450,000,000 of which co-operative crop marketing accounted for £E213,000,000. Loans in money and in kind to the value of £E86,400,000 were issued through the co-operatives in 1967.

On the recommendations of the ASU in 1969 the Law of 1954 was superseded by a new law on the co-operatives,



which provided for their further democratisation, increased aid on the part of the state, their exemption from taxes, and so on. In 1970, elections to the co-operative managements were held at all levels. In addition, five-man inspection committees were set up in each co-operative.

The Government of the ARE attaches great importance to the opening up of new lands. By the end of 1970 as many as 890,000 feddans of waste lands had been reclaimed, 79,000 feddans during the period 1952-1960 and 536,000 feddans during the years of the first five-year programme. In September 1965 a National Organisation for the Exploitation of Newly Developed Lands was set up. At first it cultivated only 178,000 feddans. In 1968/69 the figure rose to 505,000.

The Government of the ARE is taking great care to improve the fertility of the soil; a ten-year soil amelioration programme has been adopted. An appropriation of £E10 per feddan is to be made from the state budget, which will double agricultural production in the country. A good deal of attention is being given to pest and disease control, to the introduction of mechanical devices and chemicals, high-yielding varieties of crops and pedigree cattle, etc.

In 1962, by way of experiment, peasant lands in some of the villages in Egypt were ploughed up as a single field, and the harvest was shared according to the contribution made to the common field. The result was the appearance of a form of co-operatives for joint working of the land. In the summer of 1963 the government decided to make the experiment in two provinces—in Beni Suef and Kafr ash-Sheikh. For the first time in Egypt machine-hire stations were opened in these provinces. They began to loan tractors and other machines to the peasants on favourable terms. State loans for seed and water were granted to co-operatives for the joint working of the land that needed them. The first results of the experiment in these provinces were encouraging: the peasants' incomes in the co-operatives were considerably higher than those of the peasants who tilled the land on their own. Later on co-operatives of this type began to appear in other provinces. The government patiently explains and demonstrates the advantages of collective land use and of different kinds of co-operatives.

"It will take generations," Lenin observed, "to remould

the small farmer, and recast his mentality and habits. The only way to solve this problem of the small farmer—to improve, so to speak, his mentality—is through the material basis, technical equipment, the extensive use of tractors and other farm machinery and electrification on a mass scale."<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, the agrarian reforms in the Arab countries of a socialist orientation, though not yet having liquidated feudal-landowner relationships in the Arab countryside, have to a considerable extent restricted the political and economic influence of the landowners.

It needs to be stressed that the implementation of these reforms was attended by a bitter class struggle in which different methods were used, including that of the coup d'état.

The landowners before and after the promulgation of the land reform laws carried on a broad anti-government propaganda, regarding the reform as an act of violence. After unsuccessful attempts to stalemate the reform in its early stages, the landowners demanded an increase in the maximum size of the landholdings, which was big enough as it is, and began to bring pressure to bear on the national government.

When the surplus land was being taken over they resorted to fake divisions of their estates among the members of their families, made "gifts" of land to relatives and dummies, understated the size of their estates and reported part of them as unsuitable land. The landowners kept back information as to the available stock of machines and other means of production and refused loans to the peasants in money and in kind for organising their own farms on the lands made available by the reform. They contrived in various ways to dodge the laws laying down the amount of rentals and minimum wages. They resorted to threats and intimidation, burnt down the houses and crops of peasant activists, killed them, and so on. On the estate of one Egyptian landowner alone, that of Al-Fakki, as many as 20 peasants were killed between 1962 and 1966. In July 1966 Syrian landowners in the Mangiba district killed

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 217.



three peasants. Characteristically, the terror practised by landowners increased whenever complications occurred on the frontiers of one or another Arab state. Pressure by the imperialists from without was usually attended by a spurt of activity on the part of internal reaction. Landowners often spread rumours that the land would soon be returned to them, thus creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and irresolution among the peasants as to the morrow. They accused the peasant activists of being atheists and belonging to Communist and Workers' Parties and informed the security authorities about this. Unfortunately, even in the Arab countries of a socialist orientation government agencies often sided with the landowners against the peasants and threw peasant activists into prison on information received from the landowners.

As an illustration of the degree of intensity of the class struggle in the post-reform Arab countryside the following incidents in the life of the village of Kamshish in the Egyptian province of Al-Menufia are of interest. On September 4, 1952, before the Agrarian Reform Law was promulgated, a landowner in this village arrested the local peasant activists who advocated land reform and locked them up on his estate. Among those arrested was Salah Hussain, a former student of the Historical Faculty. After the death of his father he returned to the village where he headed the underground peasants' committee. On January 16, 1953, landowners in this province organised an armed attack on the peasants who intended to receive land under the proclaimed reform. Seventeen peasants were killed and one of the landowners by the name of Salah Al-Fakki, who was arrested by the authorities, was soon released from custody.

A month after these events the landowners refused to supply water to irrigate the peasants' fields. When the peasants attempted to turn the water onto their fields the landowners opened fire on them, killing one man. On July 15 of the same year a pitched battle took place between peasants and landowners. The local authorities arrested 45 peasants.

In 1956, when the young men of the village of Kamshish were mobilised for the fight against the tripartite aggres-

sion, the landowners poisoned the livestock and killed off part of the village. The Al-Fakki family celebrated victory. Its members even wormed their way into the Rural Committee, which had been set up by the newly organised mass political organisation of liberation.

A fierce struggle developed in 1958 at the elections to the local organisation of the National Union. The peasants won.

Ten peasant candidates took their seats on the Committee. The Al-Fakki family, however, tampered with the election results and succeeded in getting five of its supporters onto the Committee. The wife of Salah Hussain, 19-year-old Shahinda, was one of the five elected peasant members. Her husband was working at the time in Alexandria as a land inspector.

Shahinda was given an important errand to perform—she was to deliver a collective peasants' letter to the country's Revolutionary Council. The peasants wrote that the Al-Fakki family owned considerably more land than the law allowed and that it was using its agricultural implements, livestock and money to hold the peasants in bondage again. Shahinda delivered this letter to a member of the Revolutionary Council and told how that landowning family had contrived to keep its land by entering it in other people's names.

A special committee engaged in investigating this affair passed a decision to have all the lands of the Al-Fakki family confiscated. Two thousand feddans, of which 500 feddans were in the village of Kamshish, were handed over to the peasants. In 1963 the Rural Committee of the Arab Socialist Union was made up mainly of peasant members.

The counter-revolution, however, had not given in, the feudalists' hatred of the peasants was as strong as ever. The Al-Fakki clan held secret meetings. It attempted to join forces with other landowners and come out against the revolutionary reforms that were being introduced in Egypt. The peasants of Kamshish wrote another letter reporting a plot. All this information is contained in the diary of the peasant activist Salah Hussain, who was murdered in the Egyptian village of Kamshish at the end of April 1966. According to his testimony, the local authorities defended the landowners.



It was a quiet evening of April 30, 1966. Salah Hussain was walking down a narrow village street, where two people could barely pass each other and where the houses on both sides stood with their backs to each other. Someone hailed him by name. Salah answered. In response came a shot, sharp as the crack of a whip. He dropped onto the soft, still warm, dust. The earth, the land for which he had fought so hard, received him in its embrace.

The murder of Salah Hussain, the peasant activist, secretary of the ASU village unit, almost 14 years after the victory of the July 1952 revolution raised a storm of protest against the dominance of the landowners in Egypt. Mass anti-feudalist demonstrations of the peasants swept through the country. The President of Egypt issued a decree on May 11, 1966 instituting a Supreme Committee for the Elimination of Feudal Vestiges in Egypt. Soon afterwards 45 branches of the Committee were set up throughout the country. As a result of the work done by these committees it was found that by the middle of 1966 there were landowners in Egypt who had holdings far in excess of the maximum laid down by law. Some landowner families were found even to have increased the size of their holdings during the revolution. What is more, new landowners made their appearance. In the course of the Supreme Committee's work it was found that civil servants were often associated with landowners and hushed up their unlawful doings.

The above information shows that the agrarian reform cannot rid the farmers of landowner oppression by peaceful means without class struggle, without the backing of the peasant organisation. It confirms the conclusion arrived at in the Programme of the CPSU to the effect that "the pillars of feudalism will crumble only under the impact of a general democratic movement."<sup>1</sup>

Implementation of the agrarian reform in the Arab countries of a socialist orientation shows that the class struggle in the Arab countryside is continuing to grow in intensity.

The landowners in their struggle place great hopes on the aid of imperialism. Facts are known when Egyptian

landowners during the Suez crisis in 1956 and the June 1967 aggression came out against the revolutionary leadership of Egypt. A similar picture was to be seen in Syria.

All this proves the need for strong measures on the part of the revolutionary leadership of the ARE, Syria, Iraq, the PDRY and Algeria towards the landowners and for giving the peasants the right to decide their own destiny.

The land question in most of the Arab countries which are developing spontaneously along the capitalist path, for all practical purposes remains unsolved. The peasantry in these countries is still landless or land-poor. Only a small part of the peasantry are receiving land under the existing land reform measures. The peasants have to pay heavy annual compensation payments and land taxes, which are extremely burdensome to them. The established maximum of land holdings leaves big landownership intact. The first to gain from the agrarian reform is the national bourgeoisie of these countries. Fresh capital is flowing into industry and the banks. There is a tendency for the landowners in these countries to become bourgeoisified. They are merging more and more with the urban bourgeoisie into a single class. Agrarian reforms and other socio-economic measures have here given an impetus to the development of the productive forces in the Arab countryside on the basis of capitalist relations of production.

In the course of these reforms the well-to-do elements among the peasantry are strengthening their economic positions. Given favourable conditions and an abundant supply of labour they enjoy great opportunities for accumulation and expansion. Together with the bourgeoisified landowners this well-to-do upper crust makes use of state credit and various forms of co-operation in its own interests. At the same time the economic consolidation of the rural bourgeoisie in the course of these reforms inevitably increases exploitation of the farm labourers and the poor peasants, and leads to further differentiation and ruination of the peasantry. Rich farmers are steadily becoming a predominant force in Tunisia and other Arab countries which are spontaneously developing along the capitalist path.

The exploiter classes in the Arab capitalist countries are out to restrict the movement of the peasantry to a mere strug-

<sup>1</sup> *The Road to Communism*, p. 491.



gle against imperialism, while trying to prove to them that the class struggle is needless and harmful. For this purpose they resort to various means and methods to wean the working people away from the class struggle. In particular, they make use of the religious antagonisms left over by colonialism. Thus, in the Lebanon, an orthodox landowner will make himself out to be a benefactor and defender of the true faith against the influence of other religious beliefs.

The rulers of Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the Lebanon are attempting to supplant the agrarian reform by agrotechnical measures to improve methods of tillage, by opening up new lands, introducing high-yielding varieties of crops, supplying the peasants with fertilisers, credits, and so on. For the same purpose the ruling classes make use of elements of planning practices in the national economies. Thus, in 1963 the Lebanese Government promulgated Special Emergency Law covering agrotechnical measures known as the "Green Project", providing for "a rise in the standard of living and growth of agricultural production". The plan provided for the development of 100,000 hectares, and for the creation of an infrastructure in the rural areas. At the end of March 1966 the peasants of the Bekaa province in the Lebanon wrote that "although the government has started on the Green Project the fields of the poor and middle peasants have become no greener for it, as only the landowners are gaining by it". A similar fate befell many other agrarian projects in the Arab countries which are spontaneously developing along the capitalist path.

No important changes have taken place or are likely to take place within the next 10 to 15 years in the material and technical basis of agriculture in the Arab countries which are developing along the capitalist path. Herein lies the reason for the chronic agrarian crisis in these countries, a crisis of underproduction in some countries and of overproduction in others. The contradictions peculiar to the semi-feudal relationships in the Arab countryside are becoming more and more closely interwoven with the growing contradictions of capitalist development in these countries.

The experience of the Arab countries which are spontaneously developing along the capitalist path shows that the national bourgeoisie is incapable of radically solving the

agrarian and peasant question. Its own contradictory dual nature prevents it from doing so. Interested though it is in eliminating the vestiges of feudalism, which stand in the way of expansion of the internal market, the national bourgeoisie, on a practical plane and for political reasons, comes to terms with the landowners on the agrarian question.

Characteristically, no single political party of the national bourgeoisie in these countries advances the principle of confiscation of the landed estates and distribution of these lands free of charge among the peasantry.

The national bourgeoisie does not want to see the landowners abolished as a class. It contents itself with half-measures restricting the landed property and political privileges of the landowners. Moreover, the national bourgeoisie often seeks support of the landowners in combating the growing activity of the peasant masses and the democratic movement.

In the Arab countries which are spontaneously developing along the capitalist path the interests of the well-to-do peasants and of the small and middle landowners are gradually converging, since they are all evolving into a single class of capitalist entrepreneurs in agriculture. In Tunisia, for example, the cleavage between the well-to-do stratum and the bulk of the peasantry in the countryside is steadily widening. The rich peasants, under these conditions, no longer stand for redistribution of the land, for improving the condition of the agricultural workers, etc. Together with the landowners they exploit the agricultural labourers, tenant farmers, share-croppers and other lower groups of the peasantry.

Under the circumstances it can only be a question of neutralising this section of the peasantry in the course of the struggle of the democratic forces for a non-capitalist path of development.

#### CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

Scientific socialism regards the cultural revolution, that is, the radical transformation of society's spiritual life, as a component part of the socialist revolution. With industrial-



isation and co-operative organisation of agriculture, the cultural revolution forms a very important link in the building of socialism.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution struck a blow at the various theories peddled by the enemies of scientific socialism, who prophesied that the revolution in Russia would be a failure owing to the cultural backwardness of the population and the absence of educated cadres capable of coping with the organisation of the national economy and administration of the state. The proletariat, they maintained, could not and should not take power until it had attained a definite level of culture. Lenin exposed these reactionary notions and showed that under capitalism, which condemned the masses to ignorance and darkness, the proletariat had no chance to raise its cultural level. "If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism," wrote Lenin, "why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin revealed the historic features and tendencies governing the rise of a new culture in the period of socialist construction. He defined the basic lines of its development, worked out the question of socialist society's attitude to the cultural legacy and showed the superiority of socialist culture over bourgeois culture.

Bourgeois culture reflects and defends the interests of the ruling classes, indoctrinates the masses with a belief in the capitalist establishment's permanence and durability, drugs the minds of the working people, befores the burning issues that face them, and spiritually poisons and immobilises people.

As Lenin pointed out "the *elements* of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in every national culture, since in every nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism".<sup>2</sup>

The progressive culture of all nations always develops in a violent struggle against the forces of reaction. Socialist

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 478-79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 20, p. 24.

culture, being a culture of the masses, unlike the culture of preceding formations, cannot take shape ready-made within the framework of the old order. It forms in the process of creation of new socio-economic relationships.

At the same time the cultural revolution should not be interpreted as renunciation of the entire culture of the past. Socialist culture cannot arise in a void. It comes into being and develops on the basis of past achievements, by critically assimilating all that is most valuable and progressive in it, created by the genius and labour of man in the course of preceding socio-economic formations.

Socialist culture is the legitimate heir to and continuator of the best and most humane traditions of the cultural legacy, the assimilation of which is a necessary precondition for its development.

In moral substance and social purpose socialist culture is directly opposite to that of capitalist society. Its purpose is to help the working people create and strengthen the new social order, and serve the enlightenment and education of the new man.

The new life in the politically independent Arab countries can be built only by the Arab peoples, by the masses themselves. Of tremendous importance, therefore, is the work of educating the new man—a literate, staunch fighter for the people's cause, fully alive to the fact that the Arabs can overcome the heritage of colonialism and rise to the level of modern civilisation economically, scientifically and technologically only by following the non-capitalist path, by creating socialist relations of production enabling every man and woman to become an active builder of the new life.

The strength of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, their rapid progress in so short a space of time, is due first of all to the fact that they have done away with capitalist property and built society's life on the foundations of socialist ownership.

One of socialism's great gains is that it does away with the monopoly of the wealthy classes in education and makes education, all the achievements of science and culture, the property of the broad masses, opens up boundless vistas for the advancement of science and technology.

The idea of culture's close links with the life of the



people, with the interests of society's classes, is theoretically demonstrated in the works of Lenin. In advancing the principle of commitment in literature and art, Lenin openly proclaimed the connection between culture and politics as the most important principle of socialist culture.

He gave the lie to the claims of bourgeois ideologists to the effect that serving the interests of a definite class and pursuing a definite political line were incompatible with freedom of creative art, that art should stand above politics. Lenin showed that the idea of non-partyism in literature and art suited the bourgeoisie, who was not interested in a truthful portrayal of life and laying bare existing social contradictions.

Imperialism cannot count on success by openly proclaiming its true aims. It is compelled to build up a whole system of ideological myths obscuring its real designs and lulling the vigilance of the peoples. For this purpose it has created a gigantic propaganda machine employing all modern methods of ideological influence. Every hour of the day and night the people of practically the whole globe are subject in one degree or another to a barrage of bourgeois propaganda, bourgeois ideology. The hired ideologists of imperialism have created a special pseudo-culture designed for hoodwinking the masses and moulding the public mind in the spirit of anti-communism.

Imperialism is at its most hostile towards countries with progressive regimes. In an attempt to turn them aside from the path they have chosen, the imperialists are trying to demoralise their political parties and organisations and establish their influence over educational and cultural institutions and mass media, are planting their counter-revolutionary agents in them and supporting reactionary elements in the civil service and the armed forces. They try to use anti-communist prejudices to sow discord among the patriots. They use every available means of mass information to put over reactionary ideas and condition the public mind to accept them. Imperialism's subversive centres use for their ends newspapers, magazines and their Sunday supplements; the mail and personal contacts; various charitable organisations and funds; radio broadcasting and television, advertisements, pamphlets, electronic devices, and so on.

Imperialism and Zionism are trying to split the Arab national liberation movement, while the internal reactionaries, acting in concert with the external enemy, are trying to drain it of its social essence. In advancing, for instance, the slogan of "national struggle", the opportunists deny the existence of antagonisms between the interests of the national liberation movement and those of Arab reaction; they call for a stop to social reforms and for a return to the old ways. The reactionaries try to wean the liberation struggle of the Arab peoples away from the world revolutionary movement.

By virtue of their class nature, members of the Right wing of the Arab liberation movement seek in Israel's position, which is supported by the USA, an excuse for compromise. This policy, itself a dangerous one, is fraught with the threat of new conflicts and contradictions in the Arab liberative movement and its weakening. At the same time it serves as justification for Left-adventurist currents.

Themselves a product of petty-bourgeois mentality, the Left adventurists persistently peddle the slogan of a struggle against the petty bourgeoisie and the progressive regimes headed by them. The Leftist elements hold them entirely responsible for the defeat and make no distinction between the feudal regime of Saudi Arabia and the anti-imperialist organisation of society, such as, for instance, in the ARE. By setting impracticable tasks before the Arab national liberation movement as a whole and its various contingents, these elements are objectively playing into the hands of reaction. They substitute high-sounding but empty pseudo-revolutionary slogans for a realistic appreciation of the situation and effective revolutionary practice. This, in particular, is expressed in an attempt to represent the strategic aims of the movement as easily realisable tasks, and this shunts the movement onto adventurist tracks. All this raises among the masses illusory hopes, which do not face up to the realities and eventually breed a sense of frustration and despair.

Mention should be made of the provocative role played by the Left-adventurist groups, who align themselves with reaction in dealing a blow at the Communists and whipping up antagonisms between the Communist Parties and other



national forces. It should be recorded that the Chinese leaders are rendering support to these provocateurs by fanning anti-communism and anti-Sovietism in the Arab countries. These activities objectively fall into line with the policy of American imperialism, whose aim is to isolate the national liberation movement from the world revolutionary movement, in particular from that movement's main force—the Soviet Union, in order to follow this up with a decisive blow at the Arab world.

The anti-communist tendencies were accurately assessed in the official report of the talks between the delegations of the CPSU and the ASU held in the ARE in July 1971: "The sides have expressed their conviction that anti-communism is prejudicial to the liberative aspirations and national interests of the peoples and that there should be no room for it. It serves only the interests of international imperialist and reactionary circles. The attempts to spread anti-communism are aimed at causing a split in the ranks of the Arab revolutionary fighters against imperialism, Zionism and Israeli aggression, fighters for the Arab peoples' right to liberty and independent development. These attempts aim at breaking down the solidarity and co-operation between the Arab peoples and their friends."

The way to solve the problems of national development and social progress, to give an effective rebuff to the neo-colonialist intrigues is to step up the activities of the popular masses, to enhance the role of the working class and the peasantry, to unite the working youth and students, intellectuals, middle-class sections of the urban population, democratic-minded members of the armed forces, all patriotic progressives. It is this unity that the communist, workers' and national-democratic parties are coming out for.

The communist, workers' and national-democratic parties are defending the freedom, national independence and socialist future of their peoples. They stand for the ideas of scientific socialism and are in the front ranks of fighters for a new, democratic culture that is called upon to serve the interests of the broad masses of the working people.

Marxism-Leninism, that most progressive revolutionary and truly scientific ideology of our age, is the lodestar of

socialist culture. Socialist culture plays an important role in the education of the people. Intellectually and morally it enriches man, inspires him to constructive work, develops high moral qualities in the man of the new society, cultivates a spirit of patriotism and noble principles of socialist internationalism, exposes the reactionary ideology of bourgeois nationalism and Zionism, and lends moral support to the struggle of the peoples for peace, democracy and socialism.

The cultural revolution is part of the general pattern of the transition period to socialism and is compulsory for all countries, irrespective of the level of culture at which the revolution finds them. The culture of all socialist nations is united on a common ideological basis—that of Marxism-Leninism, a democratic orientation, profound patriotism, socialist internationalism and respect for the cultural values of other nations. The cultural revolution is characterised by a number of features common to all the countries of the world socialist system and to the countries of a socialist orientation. In all these countries an active process is taking place under which the peoples are being introduced to the achievements of human culture. Everywhere public education is making big strides, a new people's intelligentsia is being created, there is a growth in the cultural and technical level of the working class and the peasantry, and important advances have been made in science, literature and art. At the same time the cultural revolution has specific features of its own in the context of the different countries, features which are determined by their specific historical, national and socio-economic conditions and cultural level. Culture is a sphere in which the national features of a country and people are most strongly in evidence. Arab national democrats take these features carefully into consideration when carrying out cultural measures, bearing in mind that formerly backward countries once held in colonial bondage are faced with a longer, more complex and difficult road towards the new culture.

The experience of building the new culture in the Arab countries of a socialist orientation is further proof of the international significance of Marxism-Leninism's thesis which says that only by freeing itself from foreign domi-



nation and class oppression and exploitation can any people fully develop its creative capacities and gifts, scale the heights of culture and become an active and intelligent creator of the new life.

Under socialism the working people themselves for the first time in history take the lead in society. This requires a definite level of culture, experience and the existence of skilled personnel capable of intelligently managing production, exchange and distribution of material and spiritual wealth. The state of the working people makes use of every possibility for building up the new culture in the shortest space of time. During its progress illiteracy among the people is liquidated, universal compulsory free secondary education is introduced, the training of skilled personnel is carried out on a wide scale, a ramified system of cultural, educational and scientific institutions is set up, and science, technology, literature and art are developed to the greatest possible extent.

By making use of the rich heritage of progressive culture, the countries of a socialist orientation are gradually creating a new culture, socialist in content and national in form.

The Arab countries, guided by the experience of the socialist countries, are giving great attention to the task of liquidating illiteracy among the adult population and to the questions of general education of the rising generation.

During the last decade alone, it was stated at the Third Conference of Arab Ministers of Education held in the Moroccan town of Marrakech in January 1970, the number of pupils in the primary, intermediate, secondary and high schools in the Arab countries rose from 8.6 to 15 million. This growth is treble that of the Arab population between the ages of 5 and 24.

The Conference discussed three problems: the development of vocational training, wider training opportunities for girls and the liquidation of adult illiteracy, especially among the workers of agriculture and industry.

Arab countries in which industrial complexes, pipelines and gas liquefaction plants are being built need highly skilled specialists capable of dealing with complicated technical problems. The governments of the socialist-orientated Arab countries are liberal with funds where the

problem of national cadres is concerned. In Algeria, for example, 12 per cent of the total budget was assigned for public education in 1970/71. "This," said Houari Boumedienne, "points to the fact that priority has been given to man, and not to the factory or farm, since in the final analysis it is upon man that the country's future depends."

During the 1971/72 school-year 2,300,000 Algerian children attended the primary schools and over 300,000 the secondary schools and colleges. This is three times as much as ten years ago. To achieve such a result a tremendous effort was called for. There is still a shortage of school buildings, school supplies and text-books.

Great attention is also being devoted to personnel training in the ARE.

Out of a work-fit population of 8,900,000 in Egypt in 1970 5,200,000 or 62 per cent were illiterate. The government is planning to introduce compulsory nine-year education and liquidate illiteracy among the population by 1980.

For children of school age compulsory primary six-year education has already been introduced. Education is free of charge at all levels, including institutions of higher learning. Besides general education, a good deal of attention is being given to educating the rising generation in the spirit of the July 1952 Revolution and scientific socialism. Parents' committees have been set up at the schools which work in close contact with the local authorities.

During 12 years alone following the July 1952 Revolution £E541,000,000 were spent on public education in Egypt. This is more than was spent during 70 years of British rule (£E300,000,000 during 1882-1952). During 10 years following the revolution 1,413 new schools were built compared with 55 during the decade preceding the revolution. Some 5,400,000 people were attending school in Egypt in the 1970/71 school-year compared with 1,800,000 in 1952/53. There were about 1,400,000, or only 40 per cent of children of school age attending primary schools in 1952/53, and in 1970/71 this figure had risen to 3,800,000 or over 75 per cent of children of primary school age. The number of pupils receiving a partial or complete secondary education has increased in the twenty years since the July Revolution of 1952 from 250,000 to 1.5 million, i.e., six times over.



The training of national technical cadres is one of the most important sectors of the struggle for progress in the ARE.

The number of university students in the 1970/71 academic year was 161,000, compared with 54,000 in 1953/54. The number of students in other higher educational establishments in 1970/71 was about 47,000 against 2,900 in 1952/53. Personnel training is effected also through the correspondence-course system of higher educational establishments and what is known as the study centres.

During the period 1952-67 alone altogether 18,678 people graduated the engineering faculties of the Egyptian universities as against 4,822 during 1910-51. A further 2,478 graduated technical colleges. The universities and other higher educational establishments are for the first time training specialists in the field of atomic energy, oil, mining, space medicine, land reclamation and so on.

In order to democratise the higher educational establishments, to enable more workers to receive a higher education, the Arab Socialist Union set up special preparatory courses for young workers and peasants. This means that in the next few years Egypt's institutions of higher learning will be turning out more and more specialists and educated people from among the workers, peasants and artisans.

Teaching staffs in Egypt in recent years have produced text-books and accessories in Arabic in the natural and technical sciences that are up to modern standards. The ARE today has the largest printing-works in the Middle East. Distinguished scientists in Egypt are annually awarded state prizes.

A system of sending secondary school graduates abroad to study in modern fields of science, especially the technical sciences and medicine, is widely practised in the ARE. During the 1969/70 academic year there were about 4,000 Egyptians studying in the universities of the industrially developed countries.

It should be pointed out that the ARE is rendering great assistance in the training of personnel to other Arab and African countries. As many as 5,686 foreign students were studying in Egyptian universities and other higher educational establishments in the 1969/70 academic year. About

2,500 Egyptian instructors and teachers were working in 11 Arab countries in 1971.

A National Research Centre (a sort of academy of natural and technical sciences) had been set up in Egypt as early as in 1956. By 1970 it already had some 160 laboratories and institutes with a scientific staff of about 2,500. In order to step up scientific research and apply its results in practice and extend the training of personnel an Academy of Sciences and Technology was founded in October 1971 by decree of President Sadat.

An important part in raising the general cultural level of the Egyptian population is played by radio and television. The capacity of radio stations since the revolution has risen from 72 kw to 4,000 kw and transmission time from 15 to 158 hours daily. Cairo Radio is now broadcasting in 28 languages. There are about 500,000 television sets in the country. The Television Centre broadcasts through several channels with a total duration of 30 hours daily. The national theatre, too, is on the upgrade.

Similar progress is to be observed in other Arab countries, especially in those producing oil.

For example, in Kuwait before the Second World War there were only several primary schools with a six-year term of study. Kuwaitis were able to receive an intermediate and secondary education only in other Arab states or elsewhere. With the beginning of oil extraction and the companies' need for skilled workers a Teachers' Training College was opened in Kuwait in 1947, a Theological College in 1948, a second Teachers' School and a Technical College in 1953. A Ministry of Education was set up for the first time in Kuwait in 1961, and a Commercial School was opened in 1963 which trained personnel for government offices, oil companies, and so on.

In 1968 Kuwait had over 40 nursery schools with 12,000 children, 76 four-year primary schools attended by 55,000 children, and 51 intermediate secondary schools attended by 15,000 girls and 34,000 boys. School-leavers could complete their full secondary education at local schools or go to specialised schools. Kuwait's two teachers' training colleges had about 2,500 students, the Theological College 300, and the Polytechnic 900. An evening department has begun to



function at the Commercial School. In 1966 a University was opened in Kuwait. In the 1968/69 academic year it had 1,320 students. Apart from these Kuwait has a Domestic Science School, training schools for medical nurses and typists, a special school for the blind, etc. Boarding schools have also appeared since 1968/69. In 1969/70 there were 7,400 teachers in Kuwait compared with 163 in 1946/47.

And so the working masses of the liberated countries are realising more and more clearly that unless they get rid of ignorance—that most distressing legacy of colonialism and capitalism—they will not be able successfully to wage their political struggle, to withstand the ideological pressure of the bourgeoisie, and build a socialist society.

#### CONDITION OF THE WORKING MASSES

Steady improvement in the material well-being of the people is inherent in the very nature of socialist society, where there are no exploiter classes, where social ownership of the means of production reigns supreme, and where the people are absolute masters of their own life and destinies.

Production under socialism is not subservient to the selfish aims of the exploiters, but serves the interests of the working people and is developed to meet the growing material and cultural needs of the whole people. Therefore all members of socialist society have a vested interest in the development of the national economy and culture.

Such a connection between the development of production and popular consumption has never before been known in the history of mankind. Herein lies one of the greatest advantages of the socialist system.

The standard of life of a people depends on a complex of social and economic conditions, which can hardly be expressed by any single indicator. The level and modes of consumption; conditions of labour—employment, length of work time, intensity, heaviness and harmfulness of work conditions, safety measures; living and housing conditions; conditions for bringing up children and for cultural and technical growth; maintenance of the old and disabled; state of health, sickness incidence and life expectancy of the popu-

lation—such are the main indicators of a people's well-being.

Consequently, this complex embraces consumption, labour and way of life, together with the conditions for the development of man's physical capabilities and mental faculties.

It should be borne in mind, however, that in determining the standard of life one cannot confine oneself to a mere comparison of the absolute volume of material and cultural values per head of the population regardless of the amount of labour expended by the worker and the conditions of that labour. The heightened intensity of labour existing under capitalism, its heavy and harmful conditions, require a corresponding increase in the amount of material values consumed.

Another important factor to be borne in mind in assessing the level of living is the degree to which demands are met, the demands of each individual, and not just an average. This is particularly important when drawing a comparison between socialist and capitalist countries. The "average" family in capitalist society, which bourgeois statisticians are so fond of quoting, consists of families of opposite classes—those of exploiters and workers—thus concealing social inequality and the antipodes of wealth and poverty. In the USSR and other socialist countries the indicator of average consumption reflects the well-being of all the population.

On the whole, however, the growth of a people's welfare largely depends, first, on the achieved level of productive forces and the productiveness of social labour; second, on the nature and achieved degree of development of the social system. The rate of such growth likewise depends on the concrete historical conditions prevailing in the given country.

For example, having won in Russia—a comparatively backward country—the working class, in alliance with the other sections of the working people, was obliged to tackle the problem of raising living standards under conditions of relatively poorly developed productive forces.

Additional difficulties were caused by the fact that socialism in the USSR was being built amid a capitalist encirclement, by dint of the country's own unaided efforts, under



conditions of overwhelming preponderance of small peasant farming and devastating wars waged in defence of the gains of the October 1917 Revolution.

It was only the tremendous vitality and advantages of the socialist system combined with the heroism of the Soviet people and the wise policy of the Communist Party that enabled the country in the shortest possible space of time to leave both the pre-revolutionary and the pre-war 1940 level far behind and provide the population with benefits that are beyond the reach of the working people in capitalist countries.

The advantages of the socialist system gave full scope to the growth of the Soviet Union's productive forces, and enabled production to be developed at an incomparably faster rate than in the capitalist countries.

Work as a universal obligation, the absence of exploiter classes and unemployment, and other socio-economic conditions of socialism enabled real and fuller use to be made of the growth of productive forces for raising the standard of living of the population at a faster and higher rate than that of any capitalist country.

The material and cultural level of living in the USSR is steadily rising and the conditions of life and labour are improving. Suffice it to say that the life expectancy of Soviet people is more than double what it was before the revolution.

The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries in raising the standard of life is being carefully studied and utilised today by the Arab revolutionary democrats, notably in the ARE.

The victory of the July 1952 Revolution in Egypt opened the way to national liberation and social emancipation, the way to economic and cultural progress. The revolution won in a country that was extremely backward economically. From the very first days of the July Revolution its leaders saw it as their chief task to raise the standard of living of the people as much as possible.

From the very first days of the July Revolution the Egyptian democrats pursued a course at developing the country's productive forces to the utmost with the aim of improving the welfare of the people. For the first time in

Egypt's age-old history care for the ordinary man, for his free and happy life, for his health and cultural level became the pivot of all socio-political life and the class struggle.

The introduction of planning in economic management, Egyptisation and nationalisation, expansion and consolidation of the state sector, the land reform and adoption of a policy of co-operative organisation of the peasantry and other socio-economic measures are attended in the ARE, as in some other Arab countries, by concrete measures for improving the standard of living of the working people and strengthening their social rights.

The steady growth of the national income is an important indicator of the rising level of living among the Egyptian people. Thus, according to figures issued in Cairo by the progressive magazine *At-Talia* the average GNP growth rate from 1913 to 1950, that is, in the period when capitalism was developing, was a mere 1.5-2 per cent. Since the sixties, after Egypt had embarked on a non-capitalist path of development, the average has been over 6 per cent. During the period of the first five-year plan alone the national income of the ARE in constant prices had risen, as already mentioned, by £E477,000,000, an increase of 36.4 per cent. For the first time in the history of Egypt the national income growth rate was almost 2.5 times that of the average annual population growth rate. The national income in 1965/66 rose to £E1,884 million compared with £E835 million in 1952. In 1970 the Egyptian's income rose to £E68 a year, in 1971 it was about £E79. On this showing Egypt has outstripped most of the countries of South-East Asia and Africa.

The distribution of the national income, too, is beginning to assume a different pattern. The bulk of it previously went to the foreign monopolies and the local exploiter classes.

The dislodgement of foreign capital and limitation of local capital made for a more equitable distribution of material wealth and enabled a considerable part of the national income to be used for developing the productive forces and raising the standard of living.

The daily consumption per Egyptian in 1968/69 is reported to have been 2,891 calories compared with 2,324 in 1951/52.



The development of national production and income in the ARE is inseparably bound up with the growth of labour productivity and with the number of employees engaged in the country's economy. In recent years hundreds of thousands of men, women and adolescents have received jobs. Egypt's revolutionary democrats are taking care to have more and more groups of the able-bodied population drawn into material production, to raise labour productivity through improved production techniques, to systematically improve the organisation of labour and mechanise production processes, to raise the cultural and technical level of the working people and apply to labour the principle of payment by results. Another important source of national income growth based on the experience of the socialist countries is the campaign for prevention of waste and for reducing faulty work and overheads.

The results of the first five-year period and subsequent years up to the June 1967 aggression showed that the Egyptian people had chosen the correct path of development towards socialism.

It should be underlined that these economic and social successes were achieved by the thirty-five-million Egyptian people in a complex external and internal political situation.

The constant encroachments of imperialism and the menace from without compelled Egypt to divert considerable funds earmarked for productive purposes to the needs of defence.

The government's progressive policies met with opposition on the part of internal reaction. The slightest hitch or difficulty in the plans of economic development were pounced on by pro-imperialist-minded elements.

At the same time the ARE preserved the multiple nature of its economic structures with all the contradictions inherent in them. Five different forms (modes) of economy were here oddly interwoven: natural economy, small-scale commodity economy, private capitalist economy, state capitalism and elements of socialist structure in the form of the state anti-capitalist sector and the co-operative sector. The basic forms corresponded to a definite class structure: in the case of the state, anti-capitalist form it is the working class, in that of the small-scale commodity form of economy it is

the petty bourgeoisie (especially the peasantry) and in that of the private capitalist form it is the non-exploiter national bourgeoisie.

The position of these classes, however, has changed compared with the pre-revolutionary period. Whereas the working class of monarchist Egypt had been deprived of the basic means of production, at the time of the June 1967 aggression we find it becoming more and more their owner. The peasantry, once an intermediate class, became a basic class. It was now represented in all organs of state power. It was in the process of becoming a class of middle peasants. At the same time the bourgeoisie, once a basic class, was turning more and more into a minor class. It was still strong, however, relying as it did on the support of imperialism, on the means of production and money which it still controlled, on its long-standing connections with officialdom and the intelligentsia, and on the art of state, military and economic management. The strength of the bourgeoisie was also rooted in the surviving small-scale commodity form of economy. Despite the measures aimed at doing away with feudalism, which were being carried out in the country, the landowners in some cases preserved their economic positions and at times even their political influence in the Egyptian countryside.

The June 1961 laws and the ARE's official orientation since 1962 on socialism freed not only the working class and the peasantry, but also mental workers, from the bonds of capitalist slavery. The revolution imbued the intellectuals with an awareness of their own social usefulness, gave them a chance to apply their intellect and talent in all spheres of national development.

At the same time Egypt's revolutionary democrats had to overcome erroneous views and notions in regard to intellectuals. On the one hand, they came out against indiscriminate identification of the intellectuals with the exploiter classes, and on the other, they had to combat the mistrust towards the new, revolutionary regime on the part of specialists, and the tendency of some of them to look down on manual workers.

A large part of the old intelligentsia had not yet determined their ideological and political attitude towards Egypt's



socialist orientation, although they saw what a lot was being done in the country in the interest of the working masses.

As a result of the sharpening class struggle a number of laws have been passed in recent years to safeguard the social rights of the working people. As far back as April 1959 the seventeen different laws on labour and the trade unions were supplanted by a single Labour Law. Under this law the workers were granted 14 days holiday with pay, rising to 21 days after 10 years work. In addition, the workers had 10 days off with pay on national and religious holidays. A 48-hour working week was introduced, and from the autumn of 1961 one of 42 hours at enterprises of the state sector with the same rate of pay. Definite limitations were also introduced on the exploitation of women's and child labour, and pregnancy leave was granted to women. Medical service for employees was charged to the employers. To reduce unemployment overtime work was allowed only on permission from the Ministry of Industry. For the same reason workers and other employees were not allowed to hold more than one job or post.

For the first time in the country's history a minimum wage of 25 kurush a day was established for workers of the state sector. The fixing of this minimum is of great significance, since proprietors of small enterprises will now have to reckon with that minimum. It may be mentioned that in 1969 about half a million people were employed in the domestic-craft industry of the private sector, which produced almost one quarter of the country's industrial output.

Speaking of this fixed minimum the President of Egypt said in 1964: "Is this minimum wage enough for a good living? I say—no. We must work to raise this minimum. But 25 kurush are better than the 12-16 of the past. The new 7-hour day that has been introduced is better than the 9-hour day."

On July 19, 1961 four more presidential decrees were passed. One of them bound all companies and firms on UAR territory to set apart 25 per cent of their profits for the needs of the workers and staffs, of which 10 per cent was to be distributed among them directly.

The second decree stipulated that the number of members of the administrative councils (boards of directors) of the nationalised companies was not to exceed 7, and somewhat later 9, of which 2 were to represent the interests of the workers, and 2 others those of the salaried staff. These representatives were to be elected by the company's workers and other employees by secret ballot.

The third decree established as from August 1, 1961 the maximum salary of the chairmen of the boards of the general organisations and companies, their deputies, advisers and experts. This law was introduced with the object of preventing top-rank civil servants from becoming bourgeoisified.

After the June 1967 war a presidential decree dated January 1, 1968 reduced the maximum salary to £E3,000 a year, including all forms of extras and services.

The high rates of pay for members of the administration and engineering and technical personnel are due to the acute shortage of skilled cadres within the country. "Conditions prevailing in the UAR are such," said President Nasser at a meeting of the parliamentary organisation of the Arab Socialist Union in May 1965, "that one cannot speak of justice and socialism in a country where the minimum wage

#### Rates of Income Tax

Income (£E thous)	Rate of tax (per cent)	
	Up to Jan. 1, 1966	From Jan. 1, 1966
Up to 1	—	—
1-1.5	8	8
1.5-2	9	9
2-3	10	10
3-4	15	15
4-5	25	25
5-6	35	40
6-7	45	50
7-8	55	60
8-9	65	70
9-10	75	80
over 10	90	95



of the worker is 25 kurush a day, while a board director receives £E3,000 a year.

"The thing is that without that technical expert the worker would have no work. . . . We are now training many specialists, but we are still badly in need of them."

The fourth decree introduced a new income tax schedule designed to restrict the incomes of the private capitalist sector. In December 1965 the National Council decided to increase the rates of income tax.

In addition, taxes were raised on trade profits, on movable property, etc. Taxation policy, like the entire economic policy of Egypt's revolutionary leadership, was directed at restricting and ousting the exploiter elements. They are taxed at a higher rate, while the working sections of the population pay only a small part of their incomes in taxes. The government's care for the welfare of the population is strikingly illustrated by the repeated reductions in taxes payable by them.

In August 1961 a new law on pensions was passed. The right to receive a pension was enjoyed by workers and other employees of the private as well as the state sector.

The law on social insurance of workers and employees of the private sector was put into effect by the presidential decree dated March 22, 1964. Insurance funds are formed by monthly contributions made by the insured persons themselves and by contributions by employers.

The articles of the law concerning sickness and unemployment insurance were put into effect in the various areas and industries in the course of three years. In the Alexandria province a system of free medical service was effectively introduced for the population. Under the social insurance law the cost of medical treatment of an insured person is borne by the Egyptian General Insurance Organisation. In the event of complete disablement or death the pension was fixed at 80 per cent of the average monthly earnings during the last year. During sickness the insured person received a benefit of from 75 to 85 per cent of his earnings. In cases of chronic sickness (tuberculosis, etc.) the insured person received his full pay.

Old-age pensions in the private sector are payable at the age of 60, and in some cases earlier.

### Contributions According to Different Types of Compulsory Insurance (per cent)

Type of insurance	Contributions by		
	Employers	Insured persons	The state
Industrial injuries, diseases and accidents	3	—	—
Sickness	4	1	1
Unemployment	2	1	1
Disablement and death } Old age }	14	8	
Total:	23	10	2

Note: The state guarantees to cover the shortage out of the budget.

A law was passed in March 1964 amending Section 4 of the existing Labour Law of 1959. These changes applied to the activities of the trade unions and were a generalisation of their experience. According to these amendments migratory agricultural labourers as well as permanent ones were allowed to organise their trade union. Trade unions were reorganised mainly on the industrial principle.

The Third Congress of the Egyptian Trade Unions held in July 1964 stressed the need for further strengthening of the trade unions. The newly organised trade-union committees were to play an important role in establishing new relationships between the workers and employers, in rendering services to their members, in teaching them the principles of socialism and an understanding of their role in building the new society. The Congress recommended the government of Egypt to introduce a minimum wage of 25 kurush and a 42-hour working week at enterprises of the private sector. By the end of 1967 there were 27 industrial trade unions with 5,691 organisations and a membership of 1,470,000. In addition there were about 235,000 members belonging to craft unions.

In 1965 the employment of female labour was prohibited on night work (from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m.) and on heavy work



and jobs that were bad for the health. Child labour in some industries was permitted from the age of 15, and in others only from the age of 17. The working day of minors was not to exceed 6 hours. They were not to be employed on holidays or on overtime jobs.

In August 1966 new work regulations were introduced for employees of the state sector, in which considerable attention was given to raising labour productivity, improving skills, providing material incentives, applying the principles of centralised planning, etc.

As a result of the continuing class struggle the workers and other employees of Egypt succeeded, even under the conditions of continued Israeli aggression, in securing legislative consecration of some of their human rights. Between 1967 and 1968 a number of laws were issued stimulating the material interests of the working people. In June 1970, Law No. 40 was passed providing social insurance for members of the producing co-operatives. In July of the same year Law No. 45 granted certain tax rebates on social insurance to private businessmen to enable them to reopen enterprises that were standing idle.

Great importance is attached to the strengthening of the trade-union organisations in Egypt, especially in the private sector, which employs about 49 per cent of union members, and to drawing women into the trade unions—at present only 2 per cent of the trade-union membership are women.

On June 11, 1971, re-elections were announced for all 26 industrial trade unions and the board of the Trade-Union Federation. It would not be out of place to observe that the last elections to the trade unions in Egypt were held in 1964 and the powers of their leaders at all levels had expired on June 30, 1966. Elections had been postponed in the course of five years for various reasons. Re-elections to the governing committees were held not only in the industrial trade unions but in all the professional unions (journalists, doctors, etc.).

In the course of the re-elections the wage and salaried workers demanded consolidation of the country's economy, increased minimum wages, annulment of the work regulations in the state sector introduced in 1966, which, in the

opinion of the workers, imposed a wage freeze and hindered promotion, improvement of pension allowances, medical services, etc., designed to bring the new laws in line with the changes that had taken place in recent years in the basis of Egyptian society.

On September 25, 1971, a number of new laws were promulgated in Egypt covering the state sector, labour and pensions, etc.

According to the law on the general organisations and companies entire responsibility for the activities of one or another economic unit rests with the administrative councils of the state companies with a capital of no less than £E20,000. The general organisation issues to the companies the plan of production, personnel training, investments, wage fund, and approximate targets for export and anticipated profits, and does not interfere in the current activities of the companies subordinated to it. Disputes between the companies, the state and private persons are settled by arbitration set up under the Ministry of Justice.

Under the law concerning employees of the state sector provision is made for bonuses and extra pay amounting to 100 per cent of basic wage rates. They are issued to workers and other employees for improved productivity of labour,

New grades for state sector employees	Revoked old grades	Annual wage or salary (in £E)	Annual extra pay (in £E)
Highest	Deputy minister	2,000	75
	Grade 1	1,400-1,800	75
	General director	1,200-1,800	72
Grade I	Grade 2	876-1,440	60
	Grade 3	684-1,440	48
	Grade 4	540-1,440	36
	Grade 5	420-780	24
Grade II	Grade 6	330-780	18
	Grade 7	240-780	18
	Grade 8	180-360	12
Grade III	Grade 9	144-360	9
	Grades 10-11	108-360	9



improved standards of quality, and reduction of costs. They also depend on the nature and locality of the work.

The law introduces for wage and salaried workers of the state sector new grades, rates of pay and annual extras (see table above).

Extra payments are to be made annually in January of the calendar year. In making these payments testimonials of the employees for the current period are taken into account. One or more commissions consisting of no less than three members are to be set up at each state enterprise to settle questions concerning promotion of employees earning up to £E876 a year.

Under the new law, annual holidays for employees of the state sector are increased. They are to be 15 days for those who have worked one year, 21 days for those with a work record of up to 10 years, and one month for those who have reached the age of 50 and over. For the first time holidays at the request of the state sector employees have been introduced, and these must not exceed 7 days during the year and are included in the number of days of the regular holiday term.

The law provides for full payment of wages and salaries for 11 statutory holidays in the course of a year. Maternity leave is granted, but not more than three times. Sick-leave is paid at the rate of 100 per cent for the first month, 75 per cent for the 2nd and 3rd months (the company's administrative council may decide to pay 100 per cent), 75 per cent for the next 6 months, and so on. Employees of the state sector can be dismissed only on the decision of the disciplinary court.

The Civil Service Law introduces four degrees of promotion (each covering three previous grades). The minimum salary is £E108 plus £E9 extra pay a year, the maximum being £E2,000 and £E75 respectively (for the post of deputy minister). A system of bonuses is introduced for civil servants. Newly appointed civil servants pass through a probationary period of one year. For employees of the state sector this term is 6 months.

The new pension laws provide for an increase as from October 1, 1971, of 10 per cent with a minimum of £E3.6

a month plus £E0.5 for each dependent of the pensioner. The income of a working pensioner together with his pension must not exceed £E10 a month. The maximum pension is £E150 a month. A widow, if employed, is entitled to the pension of her deceased husband to an amount not exceeding £E25 a month. Pensions are again guaranteed to employees of both the state and private sectors. The right to receive a pension in the event of loss of the bread-winner or disability is enjoyed by persons who have made three consecutive monthly insurance contributions or six at intervals. The law raises the share of contributions to the social insurance fund, that of the state from 12.5 to 15 per cent of the monthly wage fund, that of private employers from 14 to 15 per cent of the wage fund monthly paid in to the General Insurance Organisation, while the share of the insured person himself is increased from 8 to 9 per cent (a minimum of 32.5 kurush a month).

The law governing participation of the workers in the administrative councils of the companies and the general organisations gives the trade-union committees and the primary units of the ASU the right to nominate two workingmen to each of these bodies from the public organisations. In the absence of an ASU unit the right to nominate four workingmen to the administrative councils is granted to the trade-union committees.

The new law concerning local self-government provides for a People's Council being set up under every governorship, presided over by the ASU secretary of the province. The Council's Executive consists of the governor, his assistant, the secretary of the ASU and representatives from state institutions at provincial level. The governor is considered the authorised agent of the ARE President in the implementation of the July 1971 Programme of National Action.

The new laws aim at improving the condition of the workers and other employees and heightening their role in the public and industrial life of Egypt.

The working class is giving full support to the revolutionary regime in Egypt. During the difficult years of aggression tens of thousands of workers became soldiers. Although the enterprises were undermanned, production



did not drop. The remaining labour force worked with redoubled energy.

The progressive socio-economic reforms carried out in Egypt dealt a powerful blow at feudalism, at foreign capital and at big and partly medium domestic capital, paving the way towards further progress, democracy and socialism.

In recent years, however, considerable difficulties have arisen in the path of transformation of Egyptian society. Routinism and red tape are still characteristic of the work of the state sector. There are evidences of growing bureaucracy and placemanship, especially among the higher ranks of officialdom. New sections of bourgeoisie have appeared as a result of embezzlement and bribery. They are steadily becoming identified with members of the old bourgeoisie. At the same time the reactionaries, by means of the black market, by pumping funds out of the state through private contracting companies, etc., endeavoured to wreck the plans for construction of a new Egypt. The reactionary elements failed to carry out their designs, however.

During the years of aggression Egypt developed for itself a special rhythm of life. The country is foiling the schemes of the Israeli militarists without ceasing its creative efforts. Mobilisation of the nation's forces for repulsing the invaders is proceeding along two fronts—the military and labour fronts. The ARE is living under the motto: "Fight with one hand, build with the other."

It should be noted that with the promulgation of the laws on labour, social insurance and the trade unions, and with the re-elections to the ASU the existing political regime is establishing itself on an increasingly broader social basis. The state power is resting more and more confidently in its activities on the popular masses. The peasants, workers and intellectuals, who are interested in the social development of Egypt, are becoming the social mainstay of the political regime in the country.

It should also be pointed out that the enforcement of the above-mentioned laws and the agrarian reform law and the organisation of co-operatives, social associations and primary organisations of the Arab Socialist Union are taking place in violent struggle with the reactionary forces.

Very often the laws are evaded or misinterpreted both by them and by representatives of the authorities.

Prior to the June 1967 events a sweeping campaign had been launched in Egypt against red tape, bribery, nepotism and all forms of malpractices among state officials and against other relics of the past.

The June 1967 war disclosed the alarming fact that enemies of the June revolution held key posts in the machinery of government, which they used in attempts to undermine the existing progressive regime. The shortage of truly revolutionary cadres in the machinery of state, in the armed forces and even within the security forces was one of the causes of the Arabs' defeat in the war with Israel. After the June war, reorganisation of both the military and civil apparatus was started. Young able specialists were placed in key posts in the army and security services. Egypt's leaders plan to reorganise the machinery of state in the immediate future to serve the interests of the masses.

They devote daily attention towards improving the public health services. Appropriations for public health are growing steadily from year to year. General health services and enterprises of the medical industry are being put into operation, and the number of medical staff, research laboratories, etc., is increasing. As a result, general sickness and diseases involving lengthy incapacity are on the decline. Special attention here is given to combating what is known as the national diseases—ancylostomiasis, bilharziasis, etc.

The state endeavours to provide the rural population with pure drinking water. Before the revolution only 1,730,000 Egyptian peasants had pure water, the rest being obliged to drink the germ-infested water of the Nile used for irrigation. After the revolution new water-treatment plants, artesian wells, etc., were built, enabling drinking water to be supplied to 11,700,000 more Egyptians during the period 1952-1962. By 1970 as many as 80 per cent of the rural and 95 per cent of the urban population used such water. By 1975 all Egyptians will have pure drinking water.

The leaders of the ARE are making tremendous efforts



to solve the country's housing problem. The state has repeatedly reduced house rent. It is doing its utmost to stimulate state and co-operative housing construction.

The state is carrying out a policy of price reductions on food and manufactures. At the end of September 1968, for instance, retail prices on rice—one of the country's staple food products—were reduced by 25 per cent. Simultaneously the government raised the purchase price of rice from £E24 to £E30 a ton and lowered the amount of state purchases from the small farmers.

In October of the same year prices on cotton and woollen fabrics were reduced by 9 to 25 per cent.

Undoubtedly, Egypt has a good deal more to do before it can set foot firmly on the path leading to socialism.

The fact that its leaders and working people realise the need for taking that road, that they are critical of their errors and shortcomings, inspires confidence that the republic will cope with its difficulties and that the Egyptian people in time will build a socialist society, in which there will be no exploitation of man by man, and where everything will be done for the good of the people. One guarantee of this is the friendship between the ARE and the USSR and other socialist countries.

"The Arab revolution is not alone in its victorious march," said the Chairman of the Arab Socialist Union in May 1964. "It knows that it has on its side the anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces of the whole world. It has on its side the national liberation movements in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the world socialist camp, which is capable of performing great deeds in the political, economic and scientific fields."

The socialist countries are doing their utmost to help the people of the ARE defend their national independence and prevent imperialist export of counter-revolution. They are thereby creating favourable conditions enabling the Egyptian people to concentrate their efforts on the cardinal problems of social and economic development, on the problem of creating the prerequisites for a speedy transition to socialism.

## ARAB-SOVIET ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

The world socialist system—creation of the international workers' movement—is unquestionably the material basis upon which rests the movement of the peoples who are fighting on all fronts of the modern world. Consequently, defence of the world socialist system is a paramount internationalist duty, since the fate of that system concerns not only the peoples who belong to it, but the peoples of all the world. The peoples of the Arab countries have a special vested interest in seeing that socialist system strengthened.

In regard to the national liberation movement in the Arab countries the world system of socialism and the world's working classes are fulfilling their historical mission along several simultaneous lines. They are a reliable support for and true ally of these countries in their struggle against imperialism, for economic independence and social progress; they are rendering increasing material assistance to the developing countries; finally they are introducing the ideas of scientific socialism into the national liberation movement, and generously sharing their rich experience of social and economic progress with the revolutionary and patriotic forces of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"Relying on its steadily growing economic and defence potential," says the Document of the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (June 1969), "the world socialist system fetters imperialism, reduces its possibilities of exporting counter-revolution, and in fulfilment of its



internationalist duty, furnishes increasing aid to the peoples fighting for freedom and independence, and promotes peace and international security."<sup>1</sup>

A distinctive and most important feature of the economic and technical co-operation between the USSR and the Arab and other developing peoples is that as a result of the industrial and other projects created with the assistance of the Soviet Union and the carrying out of other programmes the economic independence of the Arabs is strengthened. Assistance by the socialist states enabled the liberated Arab countries in the least painful form to break free from the system of capitalist economy or at least to appreciably lessen their dependence upon it. The assistance given to these countries by the socialist states in the training of national personnel, in developing science, technology and public education, and in reviving the national culture deprives the imperialists of important levers of spiritual influence on Arab public life and prevents the spread of reactionary anti-socialist ideas.

Arab-Soviet friendship and co-operation is one of the most vivid expressions of the growing unity of the forces of world socialism and the national liberation movement.

The establishment and development of a state sector in the Arab countries, concentration of income sources and material production in the hands of the state, and the implementation of progressive social and economic reforms create in these countries the material and technical basis for planned management of the national economy and objective conditions for their transition to a non-capitalist path of development leading to socialism.

At the same time it should be pointed out that these countries' ties with the world socialist system are an essential condition for their development along a non-capitalist path.

To build a material and technical base, to bring the productive forces up to modern standards under conditions of political and economic pressure by the imperialist powers is impossible without the fraternal disinterested aid of and close co-operation with the socialist countries.

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 23.

The go-it-alone policy, as advocated by pseudo-revolutionaries, leads away from socialism and runs counter to the interests of the liberated peoples.

For the liberated nations to be able to go over to socialism, avoiding the capitalist formation, a combination of favourable factors, both external and internal, is required. The external factors make such a transition possible, while the internal factors realise that possibility.

The history of the rapid build-up of the national movement in its new context is also a history of the consolidation of friendship and co-operation with the USSR and other countries of the socialist community. Any attempt to isolate the national liberation movement from its allies—the USSR and other socialist countries, is likely to be a serious obstacle to some liberated countries in taking the non-capitalist path of development.

At present the Soviet Union is rendering assistance to the young Arab states in all spheres of their economy and culture, but chiefly in developing the productive forces, in building important projects envisaged in the plans of economic and social development adopted by the governments of the Arab countries.

Soviet aid goes primarily to develop the basic economic branches, and to the training of national cadres. Thus, the USSR assists Egypt with 137 economic, social and cultural projects, Syria with about 50, Iraq with 72, Algeria with over 80 and the Yemeni People's Democratic Republic with over 40, and so on. In 1972 the Soviet Union had agreements for economic and technical co-operation with 13 Arab countries—Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, the Yemeni Arab Republic, Kuwait, the Yemeni People's Democratic Republic, Libya, Syria, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan and Mauritania.

The main forms of economic and technical co-operation between the USSR and Arab countries, as with other developing countries, are: technical assistance in building projects; technical assistance in building projects in co-operation with other socialist countries; construction by Soviet building organisations on a "turn-key" basis; assistance in carrying out development programmes on account of contributions to the UN.

Agreements for economic and technical co-operation be-



tween the USSR and Arab countries are based on the principles of equality, respect for the sovereignty of each of the parties, non-interference in one another's internal affairs and mutual advantage.

In rendering economic and technical aid the Soviet Union does not attach any political strings to it nor does she use it as a means of exerting pressure when the political climate is tense. By way of comparison, we might recall how after 1956 the USA on several occasions stopped food deliveries to Egypt on the basis of Law No. 480, as soon as she decided that Egyptian policy did not suit her interests, and stopped them altogether in 1968 after the beginning of Israeli aggression.

In concluding agreements with the Arab countries, as with other developing countries of the Third World, the Soviet organisations, by way of distributing obligations on projects under construction, usually undertake to carry out surveying and designing work, and effect deliveries of unitised equipment and spares, and also materials that are unobtainable on the spot.

This system of financing makes it possible for a large number of projects to be undertaken using the credits offered and at the same time to ensure the mobilisation of national material and financial resources to cover costs in local Arab currency.

The USSR sends skilled experts to help in construction and assembly and in the training of native personnel capable of replacing Soviet specialists on completed projects.

All the factories, plants and other projects built with the assistance of the USSR are the full property of the Arab nations.

The Arab countries usually undertake the organisation of construction work, including the hiring and payment of the labour force, the supply of local building materials, defrayal of transportation costs on equipment and materials delivered from the USSR from the port of shipment to the building sites and other expenses in local currency.

The credits granted the developing Arab countries by the Soviet Union and the equipment and materials which it supplies to them are not surpluses it could do without, but things that could be used to advantage for further strength-

ening the Soviet economy. Neither are they export of capital for the exploitation of the Arabs and for making profits. The economic and technical co-operation carried out by the Soviet Union is an expression of the Soviet people's solidarity with the Arabs, fraternal assistance in overcoming the backwardness inherited from colonialism, in promoting their progress.

At the same time this co-operation is founded on the community of vital interests between the world socialist system and the national liberation movement, which is fighting imperialism and the old and new colonialism. This co-operation is built on the sound economic foundation of mutual advantage, which makes use of the existing international division of labour and natural and economic facilities offered by the partner countries.

It was emphasised at the 24th CPSU Congress that the Soviet Union's economic co-operation with the developing countries was assuming the character of stable division of labour opposed to the system of imperialist exploitation in the sphere of international economic relations.

Moreover, the developing Arab countries receive from the Soviet Union economic and technical assistance and adopt the methods and experience of the Soviet experts, while the USSR receives from them in exchange various goods the production of which in the USSR is either impossible (such as mango and other tropical fruits) or would involve too great and unwarranted an expenditure.

The agreements for economic and technical co-operation provide for the following forms of reimbursement: repayments on long-term loans granted by the government of the USSR (this form is the predominant one); clearing accounts on trade turnover and services; payments on short-term and long-term credits; payment in cash in convertible and local currency. Soviet long-term credits are granted as a rule at the rate of 2.5 per cent per annum, repayable in the course of 12 or more years, that is, a period sufficient to ensure a return on investments. Payments on credits begin after completion of deliveries unitised for each project which is under construction or put into service. This means that Soviet credits, practically speaking, may be paid off on account of the income from enterprises built with the aid of the Soviet



Union. Egypt, for instance, delivers to the USSR sea-going vessels, rolled ferrous metal, automobile and tractor parts and electrical equipment, and in 1972 Iraq and Syria began to deliver oil to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In most cases the USSR does not demand repayment in convertible currency, but consents to receive in payment goods of traditional Arab export. In this way Soviet credits help to expand mutually stable trade ties between the USSR and the Arab countries.

Thus, the ARE, for example, pays off Soviet credits with deliveries of long-staple cotton, cotton yarns, peanuts, rice, oranges and other goods.

Economic and technical co-operation agreements provide for Soviet assistance to the Arab countries in carrying out prospecting, in developing industry, agriculture, transport, communications, education and culture and in training national personnel.

During the post-war period, by the middle of 1972, the Soviet Union had built and rendered economic and technical assistance in building over 350 industrial enterprises and other projects in the Arab countries. The main form economic and technological co-operation between the USSR and Arab countries takes is assistance in the development of the national industries. Such aid accounts for over 70 per cent of the total.

Of great importance for the Arab countries is the assistance rendered by the USSR in prospecting for mineral resources. Until recently the colonialists here extracted oil and only such minerals as they required for export without considering the needs of the Arab countries themselves. Now these countries are making every effort to tap their natural resources in order to speed up the development of the national economy. Not having the necessary funds, experience, trained personnel and equipment, however, they turn to the USSR and other socialist countries for help in carrying out surveys and prospecting.

In compliance with these requests the Soviet Union's agreements with Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Iraq, Syria and other countries contain a corresponding proviso.

An example of this fruitful co-operation is provided by Egypt. The Soviet Union's technical assistance here aims at

ensuring conditions for the development of the mining and oil industries. Soviet-Egyptian co-operation has led in recent years to the discovery in a number of areas of Egypt of rich deposits of oil and gas, iron ore, coal, lead and zinc ores, phosphates, limestone, etc. In Algeria, Soviet experts helped in prospecting for an extensive deposit of mercury. A mercury plant has been built there with the aid of the Soviet Union. The project was made by the Tashkent Research and Designing Institute. The main constructions and equipment for this plant were supplied by the USSR. On the basis of another prospected large deposit a lead and zinc concentration plant is being built with the assistance of the USSR. Assistance by Soviet experts in prospecting for mineral resources is continuing.

In Syria, large phosphorite and rock-salt deposits have been discovered, iron, chrome, manganese ore and asbestos deposits have been estimated with Soviet assistance.

The Soviet Union is giving economic and technical assistance to Iraq in developing the state oil extracting industry by carrying out prospecting and surveys, supplying equipment and materials and sending experts to organise the extraction of oil in North Rumaila and other deposits. The commercial extraction of oil in this area was started in 1972. At the first stage 5,000,000 tons of oil a year will be produced, rising up to 18,000,000 tons at the next stage. With the aid of the Soviet Union rich deposits of phosphates, sulphur and quartz sand have also been found in Iraq. In Syria, Soviet geologists have discovered large deposits of oil, after West-European experts had failed to find any in the course of decades. In the Arab Republic of Yemen raw material for the cement industry has been discovered and a cement works built there with Soviet help. Simultaneously, underground water springs have been discovered to meet the needs of the cement works, a fish canning plant, a refrigerator and other enterprises in the port of Hodeida. In Morocco work has been completed for estimating the prospects of cobalt deposits in the Bouazzar area.

On the basis of its own experience in developing agriculture in its once arid areas of Central Asia and the Caucasus, the Soviet Union is rendering economic and technical



assistance to the Arab countries in opening up disused and idle lands and utilising water resources. The assistance rendered by the Soviet Union in the construction of the Aswan High Dam has won world-wide recognition.

The amount of electrical energy generated by the Aswan complex is approaching designed output, namely, 10,000 million kilowatt-hours a year, or almost twice as much as was produced in Egypt in 1968.

One can judge of the size of this gigantic construction from the following figures: the Dam has a maximum height of 111 metres; its overall length, together with the shore section, is about 5 kilometres and its height at the shore sections is 40-50 metres. It is 980 metres wide at the base and 40 metres wide at the crest. The volume of work put into it was equal to the construction of 17 pyramids of Cheops.

The Dam has created the world's largest water storage basin with a capacity of 160 cubic kilometres, 500 kilometres long and 11 kilometres wide with a maximum depth of 97 metres. The Dam and irrigation system will allow the cultivated area in Egypt to be expanded by one-third. This will raise grain crops by one million tons, sugar cane by 120,000 tons, and so on. Reduced imports of this produce are estimated by Egyptian economists to yield an annual economy of about £E100 million in foreign exchange. The utilisation of new croplands will create effective conditions for increasing the national income by 40-50 per cent compared with 1959.

Egyptian economists figure that the outlay on the building of the Aswan High Dam was recouped by 1971, since the economic effect of Aswan by that time amounted to £E450,000,000. At present Soviet-assisted work is in progress in Egypt on irrigation and reclamation of 126,000 hectares of land.

The USSR is currently helping Egypt bring electricity to the countryside, construct low-head hydro-complexes, protective installations, and improve navigation conditions and fight pollution on the stretch of the Nile between Aswan and Cairo.

The Soviet Union is giving economic and technical assistance to Syria in the construction of a hydrotechnical complex on the Euphrates, the first stage of which went

into operation in 1973. As a result of this project electricity generation will be trebled and the area of irrigated lands in Syria will be doubled.

Soviet specialists have done a big job in afforesting, draining and irrigating 600,000 hectares of land in Iraq. Since October 1971 the USSR has been helping Iraq build a large dam to control the canal between Lake Milek-Tartar and the Euphrates, which will not only help solve the problem of diverting part of the flood water of the River Tigris into the lake thereby reducing the threat of flooding, but will also permit further irrigation of large tracts of land in the middle and lower Euphrates valley. It is planned to build two power stations on tributaries of the Tigris, which when fully operational will more than double the country's output of electricity. Although the canal is only forty kilometres long, it will have a volume twice that of the Suez Canal. The average depth will be 30 metres and the width at the bottom 80-90 metres. Under the Iraqi-Soviet protocol of August 30, 1973, the Soviet Union will assist Iraq in drawing up a general sketch map of its water and land resources and designs for building irrigation systems and installations on the Euphrates. Moreover, Soviet specialists will help make technical and economic estimates of a large hydroengineering project on the Euphrates. In Algeria Soviet hydrogeologists are prospecting for underground water and studying the possibility of using it for irrigation. In the arid areas of Algeria work has started with Soviet assistance on the construction of small dams for creating a system of irrigation on an area of 10,000 hectares. The Soviet Union is rendering assistance also to Tunisia in the building of small dams and a system of irrigation and land improvement. In 1973, construction was completed of a hydroengineering project—a dam, a power station and a high-voltage transmission line—at the locality of Zauya-N'Urbaz in Morocco. A man-made lake holding 500,000,000 cubic metres of water was built here to irrigate an area of 20,000 hectares in the Dra River valley. The Soviet Union is giving technical assistance to several other Arab countries in the study of water, land, mineral and hydro-power resources.

An important aspect of economic and technical co-operation is the assistance rendered Arab countries by the USSR



in developing their national industry, power engineering and transport. The Soviet Union actively supports the Arab countries in their endeavours to achieve industrialisation and create a modern diversified economy. Egypt can be cited as an example of this fruitful co-operation. Credits granted Egypt by the Soviet Union covered some 30 per cent of the foreign currency expenditure required for the first five-year development plan and about 50 per cent during the second five-year plan. In this connection it should be borne in mind that 77 per cent of Soviet credits are earmarked for industrial development, that is, for implementing the government's policy of industrialisation. By the beginning of 1973 out of the 137 projects of Egyptian-Soviet co-operation 82 had been fully completed. These are industrial and power projects in the metallurgical, engineering, shipbuilding and chemical industries. Until recently there were no enterprises of this type either in Egypt or in any other of the liberated Arab countries.

The most important industrial enterprises built, or under construction or planned with the assistance of the USSR are the above-mentioned Aswan High Dam, a thermal power station for 100,000 kilowatts at Suez, a metallurgical plant at Helwan (expansion from 300,000 to 1,500,000 tons of steel a year), a coke-chemical plant—the largest of its kind in the Arab world, a metal-cutting lathes works, a radio engineering plant, a shipyard, two oil refineries, a ferrosilicon alloys plant, a phosphate and aluminium works, and others.

These projects, including the Aswan complex, enable Egypt to produce 2.5 times more electricity than in 1966 and 4-5 times more iron and steel. The capacity of the petroleum processing industry will be considerably increased. In 1968 the big metallurgical and engineering complex built at Helwan with the assistance of the USSR yielded an industrial output equal to that produced in Egypt before the July 1952 Revolution.

It should be stressed that Soviet-Egyptian economic co-operation is an important factor contributing to the growth of the working class in Egypt. It helps implement the government's measures aimed at providing increased employment for the population and raising their standard of living.

For example, the projects under construction with Soviet assistance in 1966 employed over 40,000 workers, technicians and engineers, or about 15 per cent of the total number engaged in capital construction. The number of employed at the enterprises built with the assistance of the Soviet Union during 1964-65 amounted to 16.3 per cent of the total number employed at enterprises put into service during the first four years of the first five-year plan.

The Soviet Union, as mentioned above, is rendering financial and technical assistance to Syria in the construction of the Euphrates hydroengineering complex, whose large hydroelectric power plant (of 300,000 kilowatt initial capacity, to be eventually increased to 800,000 kilowatts) will provide cheap electric power to Syrian industrial enterprises and agriculture. Soviet experts have had a hand in developing another sphere of the Syrian economy, which is already yielding a profit—the oil industry. In 1968 Syria exported its first million tons of oil, being the first Arab country in which the entire oil industry—production, transportation, processing and marketing, is in the hands, not of private capital, but of the state. Syria has been able to achieve this thanks to co-operation with the USSR.

A programme for the development of the Syrian oil industry for 1971-1975 has been prepared with the help of Soviet specialists. In 1971 Syria produced 5.5 million tons of oil, and in four years time she will be able to produce 14-15 million tons.

An asbestos-and-cement works, factories producing ceramic tiles, reinforced concrete sleepers, and nitrogen fertilisers are among the projects on which Soviet technicians are working side by side with the Syrians.

The Soviet Union is giving considerable assistance to Algeria in developing its heavy industry. With the economic and technical aid of the USSR Algeria is building an iron-and-steel plant at Annaba with a capacity of up to two million tons of steel and rolled products. The first stage with an output capacity of 410,000 tons of steel a year went into service in 1972; the plant will form the basis for a national metal-working industry. The USSR is helping Algeria to build works producing tractors, engines, machine-tools, pipes for the needs of the oil industry, etc.



Of great importance for Algeria's mining industry will be the lead and zinc concentrating plant at El-Abeda, since the government is planning to increase production of concentrates up to 200,000 tons.

In accordance with the Soviet-Moroccan agreement for economic co-operation concluded in 1967 it is planned to build a metal-working complex at Casablanca; a heat and power station was put into service at Jerad, with a capacity of 150,000 kw, which increased Morocco's electricity output by one-third.

In Iraq the USSR has built an agricultural machinery works, a tractor assembly plant, a plant producing electric motors, power transformers and other electrical items.

The Soviet Union is at present helping build three thermal power plants, an oil refinery at Mosul with a capacity of 1.5 million tons and a 600-km pipeline from Baghdad to Basra.

While building enterprises of the heavy industry, the governments of the Arab countries consider it a priority task to meet the requirements of the home market in food products and light industry manufactures to the greatest possible extent by developing local production.

During the last few years, with the technical and economic assistance of the Soviet Union, several enterprises of the light industry have been built and put into service or are nearing completion in Egypt and the Sudan. In Egypt three textile mills, three factories producing dairy products (with a daily processing capacity of 75 tons of milk), a desiccated onions factory, etc., have been put into operation.

The Soviet Union has helped the ARE to build an anti-biotics factory, and a similar factory has been built at Samarra (Iraq). A glass factory at Ramadi, a cotton combine, a hosiery and knitted garment factory at Kuta and grain elevators have also been built in Iraq, while fish canning, milk and other factories and plants are now under construction.

Two grain elevators and four factories for processing agricultural produce have been built and put into operation in the Sudan with the aid of the Soviet Union. A hospital for 400 beds and a Vet Institute are now under construction. Plans are also in hand for building other important medical projects.

The Soviet Union is helping a number of Arab countries, notably Egypt, Iraq and the Yemeni People's Democratic Republic to organise a fishing industry and build fish-processing plants.

Besides construction of new industrial projects in the Arab countries, the Soviet Union, at the request of the Algerian Government, has undertaken to give the necessary assistance in rehabilitating and putting into operation a number of enterprises of the manufacturing industry. According to preliminary estimates the rehabilitated and modernised enterprises in Algeria will produce nine times as much as they did before and will employ 3.5 times more workers. They will yield an annual profit of 41.6 million Algerian dinars, and this is bound to give a strong stimulus to the development of the national economy.

The Soviet Union is helping to develop the transport system in a number of Arab countries.

The development of Egyptian shipping will be stimulated by the shipyard that is being built at Alexandria with the assistance of the USSR and which will be the largest of its kind throughout the Middle East. Sea vessels totalling 50,000 tons deadweight will come off its slips yearly. Soviet experts are co-operating with Egypt in organising sea shipping.

In Iraq the 543-kilometre-long Shuaiba-Basra Railway has been modernised and the new railway line between Shuaiba and Umm Qasr (57 kilometres) has been put into service. In March 1964 train traffic was opened on the Baghdad-Basra line. Earth excavation on railway construction in Iraq in 1969 amounted to 6,000,000 cubic metres; 657 installations were erected, a reinforced concrete sleepers plant was built and rolling stock supplied—25 diesel locomotives and over 1,700 freight and passenger cars.

Railway lines 734-km long are being built in Syria linking Latakia, Haleb and Qamishli and providing up-country areas with an outlet to the sea. Another line under construction is that of Akkar-Tartus (42 km). Surveys are being carried out for construction of a Homs-Damascus section.

In the Yemen the seaport of Hodeida and a motor road between Hodeida and Taiz over 200-km long were built, among others, with the assistance of the USSR.



Economic and technical assistance by the USSR in reviving and developing Arab economy is the best proof of the Soviet state's desire to see these countries free and economically independent.

The training of skilled workers and engineering personnel is one of the most acute and difficult problems the Arab countries have to face in carrying out their programmes of economic, social and cultural development. This problem is at its most acute in the state sector. Lack of needed specialists leads to a lack of skilled management of state sector enterprises. Not infrequently, as a result of insufficient experience, painstaking businesslike work in organising production is abandoned in favour of administrative rule and the passing of arbitrary decisions, which do not take into account the real economic processes that are taking place in this or that Arab country. All this tends to impair the efficiency of enterprises of the state sector and often is the cause of some of them being run at a loss. This in turn leads to wastage of material resources which are insufficient as it is, becomes a heavy burden on the state budget and gives rise to serious economic problems.

Therefore, at the request of the governments of the Arab countries the Soviet Union sends some of its engineers and technicians to take care of production processes during the early stages of the enterprises' operation. Simultaneously, with the help of Soviet experts, national personnel are trained within these countries or in the Soviet Union to enable them in time to take over these functions themselves and ensure normal operation of constructed enterprises and other projects. The Soviet Union co-operates in the building of radio stations, institutes, vocational schools, educational centres, colleges and schools of general education for the training of national personnel. In Iraq, for example, a radio station has been built with the help of the Soviet Union. This is of great importance, since the population, among whom there is a high rate of illiteracy, get their information chiefly from the radio.

In Algeria a technical school has been set up at Al-Arrash in which over fifteen hundred young Algerians are being trained in 24 trades; other completed projects are an educational centre at Borj al-Bahri for 500 students, a technical

school and an institute of oil, gas and chemistry at Bumerdes, a hydroengineering and land reclamation institute in the town of Blida—the fifth institution of higher learning opened within the framework of Algerian-Soviet co-operation. In Tunisia a National Technical Institute attached to the University has been built. The 36 educational centres set up in Egypt with the assistance of the Soviet Union have trained over 50,000 skilled workers of over 140 trades. Soviet specialists have helped to train over 19,000 skilled Egyptian workers and foremen in the process of building the Aswan High Dam. Three secondary schools of general education have been built in the Yemen Republic each having 600 pupils. In addition, several thousand Arabs have received an industrial training at leading enterprises in the USSR. Young people from the ARE and other Arab countries are being taught at over 300 institutions of higher learning and at secondary schools in the USSR. On September 1, 1968, there were about 3,500 Arab students attending Soviet institutions of higher learning.

Altogether in 1968 about 20,000 people from the Third World were receiving an education in the socialist countries, the largest bodies of students being those of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, the Sudan and the Yemen.

Under agreements with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries several thousand builders, technologists, mechanics, geologists, teachers, doctors and other professions are now working in the Arab countries, generously sharing their experience with their Arab friends.

For example, about 40 specialists from the socialist countries are giving assistance to Algeria's oil-industry workers; 300 Polish engineers and 80 doctors besides numerous other Polish specialists are working in the Arab countries. Czechoslovakia annually sends 700 of its engineers to developing countries to assist the Arabs. The same applies to specialists from Bulgaria, Rumania and other countries.

As a result of the measures taken to train national personnel, 27 of the 36 industrial enterprises built and put into operation in Egypt by the beginning of 1969 were serviced completely by Egyptians without the aid of Soviet specialists.

In Syria the factory producing reinforced concrete sleepers



and the Rastan hydroelectric power station built with Soviet assistance are operating effectively without employing Soviet specialists. In other Arab countries, too, Soviet specialists are being steadily replaced by locally trained personnel.

The economic and other forms of Soviet co-operation with Arab countries, as with other developing countries, represent a new type of inter-state relationships first introduced by the Great October Socialist Revolution. Year by year this co-operation is exercising a growing influence on the development of international relations.

The interests of Arab-Soviet co-operation dictate the need for solving such problems as the speedy practical working of prospected mineral resources, the marketing of mineral and agricultural raw materials and produce of enterprises built with Soviet assistance, making these enterprises better paying concerns, extending Arab-Soviet production contacts, improving the forms of mutually advantageous economic co-operation, etc.

To deal with these problems there must be joint efforts and initiative on both sides.

Of great importance for the Arab countries are their trade relations with the USSR. After winning political independence the Arab countries were able for the first time to enter independently into international economic relations and widen the circle of their trade partners. Nearly all the Arab countries have now established friendly and equal economic contacts with socialist countries and young national states. This helps to strengthen the positions of the Arab countries in foreign trade and enables them to secure better terms in their trade with capitalist countries.

The share of the socialist countries in Arab foreign trade is increasing year by year. The Soviet Union accounts for more than half the trade turnover between the socialist and independent Arab countries. It should be noted that during the period between the two world wars the possibility of developing Soviet trade ties with the Arabs was extremely limited. The Soviet Union was prevented from developing trade with the Middle East countries by the foreign colonialists, who raised impassable barriers to this trade. They used the Bolshevik menace to scare ruling circles in the Arab countries and tried their hardest to isolate the Arab countries

economically and politically from the USSR while keeping these countries' trade in the hands of their dealers in order to increase their profits at the expense of the Arabs. Arab tradesmen, however, had sought ways of doing direct trade with the USSR. A fairly lively trade was carried on with Russia in the 19th century. At the first opportunity Iraqi merchants took part in the Nizhni-Novgorod Fair in 1925, delivering goods to Soviet Russia to the value of 232,000 roubles. In the years that followed Soviet-Iraqi trade steadily expanded. The year 1928 saw the establishment of a cargo steamship service between Soviet ports and the Persian Gulf. On November 1, 1928, a treaty of friendship and trade was concluded between the USSR and the Yemen.

After the October Revolution Soviet trade contacts were resumed with Egypt. Already in 1924 the Soviet Union was a major supplier of fuel to that country, accounting for 50 per cent of its kerosene imports. Soviet-Egyptian trade relations were mutually advantageous. To disrupt this trade the British colonialists descended to the fabrication of false documents alleging the Soviet Cotton Purchasing Bureau in Alexandria to be engaged in subversive activities.

As a result of all this, the Soviet Union's foreign trade with the Arab countries up to the Second World War was extremely irregular and limited in volume, and by the end of the '30s, under pressure of the foreign colonialists, it virtually ceased.

After the Second World War the international situation underwent a complete change. With the breakdown of the colonial system quite different conditions for Soviet-Arab trade relations were created.

Beginning from 1948 Soviet and Egyptian foreign trade organisations began to conclude mutually advantageous transactions covering an exchange of grain for cotton. After the July 1952 Revolution Soviet-Egyptian relations were established on a secure foundation. In August 1953 the first payment agreement, and in March 1954 the first trade agreement were concluded between the USSR and Egypt.

By the beginning of 1973 the USSR had trade and payment agreements with practically all the Arab countries—Egypt, Algeria, the Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia, Syria, Iraq and others.



These agreements define the general principles and legal basis of Soviet-Arab trade, the structure of export and import and the major conditions for settling accounts. In these agreements the Soviet Union takes into consideration the specific interests of the Arab countries. Thus, the supplement to the first long-term trade agreement between the USSR and Egypt dated June 23, 1962 states that the Soviet Union will not demand of Egypt priorities and advantages which it has granted or may grant in the future to any of the Arab countries.

Characteristically, the Soviet Union as from January 1, 1965 unilaterally exempted from customs duties all goods imported from the developing countries. This tended to increase Soviet imports from those countries.

On the whole, between 1955 and 1971 the turnover of trade between the Arab countries and the Soviet Union grew from 30.7 million roubles to 1,142.8 million, i.e., almost 37 times over. In the meantime, the total turnover of Soviet foreign trade grew only fourfold. In 1971, the Arab world accounted for 37 per cent of the turnover of Soviet trade with the developing countries.

Many Soviet-Arab trade agreements specify that exports to the Arab countries from the USSR and imports into the USSR will be effected on the basis of attached lists of goods. The Soviet Union has never imposed on any Arab country goods whose import was likely to adversely affect national production. As a rule the lists of Soviet exports provide for priority deliveries of machines, equipment and other goods for industrial purposes, and in some cases, at the request of the Arab signatories, consumer goods are included which are not produced locally. The lists of goods marked for import into the USSR usually contain the traditional items of Arab export which are of interest to the Soviet market.

Most favourable for the Arab countries are the long-term trade agreements with the USSR in which the amount of goods is specified over a number of years and liable to be determined more precisely in annual agreements. These agreements allow Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, the Sudan and other Arab countries to reduce their dependence on market fluctuations and to plan their economies at longer range.

Trade between the USSR and Algeria increased from 2.1 million roubles worth in 1960 to 121.9 million in 1971. During the same period Soviet trade with Egypt increased from 172 to 643.9 million roubles worth, with Syria from 16.9 to 78.3 million, with Iraq from 21.3 to 104.6 million and so on. Machinery and plant as a proportion of the total Soviet exports to Arab countries increased from 0.4 per cent in 1955 to 46 per cent in 1971. The largest place is occupied by plant for complete enterprises (in 1970 120.8 million roubles or 42 per cent of the total value of Soviet exports of machinery and plant to the Arab countries). The USSR also exports metal-cutting lathes, excavators, bulldozers, tractors, automobiles, ships, aircraft and other types of machinery.

By and large, Soviet-Arab trade and payment agreements have one feature in common, namely, they are all based on principles of respect for each other's interests, mutual goodwill and absolute equality of the parties concerned.

It should be stressed that in order to develop economic ties with the Arab countries the Soviet Union had to put in a good deal of work in establishing transport communications. During the early post-war years the Soviet Union's shipping facilities were limited. Its merchant fleet had suffered during the war and stood in need of replacements. The emergent Arab states, too, had no adequate merchant fleet of their own. The Western powers' monopoly of shipping not only made freightage dearer and involved heavy expenditures of foreign currency, but exposed some Arab countries to the possibility of economic boycott by the former colonial powers.

In recent years Soviet sea transport has made great advances. During the period 1960-65 alone the seaborne freight turnover increased 3.4 times, mainly as a result of increased foreign shipments. According to the USSR Register the gross tonnage of the merchant fleet on January 2, 1970 reached 14,200,000 registered tons, an increase of 60 per cent over the last 5 years. The Soviet merchant fleet advanced to sixth place in world tonnage (in 1955 it held 12th place) and is fully capable of ensuring the independence of Soviet foreign trade transportation.

This advance has been particularly rapid in recent years in the case of trade with the developing countries, especially



the Arab countries. Regular shipping lines have recently come into service between Soviet and Arab ports. One such line, run jointly by Egypt and the USSR, has been operating successfully these last 15 years between Ilyichevsk, a new port on the Black Sea, and the Egyptian port of Alexandria.

In 1972 a Ministry of Marine Transport was set up in Egypt. It is planned that in the near future 30 per cent of the volume of the country's foreign trade that goes by sea will be carried by Egyptian-made vessels, as compared to 6 per cent in 1971.

Some other Arab countries, following the example of Egypt, are acquiring a merchant fleet of their own. For example, Algeria, Morocco, Syria and Iraq. The problem of sea transport, of course, has not yet been solved. The Western shipping companies still dominate the market, but they no longer hold their former monopoly in the handling of the Arab countries' foreign trade.

Arab statesmen and politicians highly appreciate the advantages of economic co-operation with the Soviet Union. President Nasser said in his speech in May 1964: "The people of the United Arab Republic will never forget the friendly assistance which the Soviet Union has given them at all stages of the arrangements arrived at on questions of construction of the Aswan High Dam. The people of Egypt will never forget the creative work of the Soviet engineers and workers in the Soviet Union's research institutes and at those Soviet industrial enterprises which produced the necessary equipment for that construction. The people of the United Arab Republic will never forget the industry and patience displayed by the Soviet engineers and workers who worked together with their brother Egyptians on the building of the Dam. These people performed miracles in climatic conditions they were unaccustomed to. The wives and children who came here, to Aswan, with the Soviet specialists shared with their husbands and fathers all the hardships and difficulties. This, too, we highly appreciate."

As a token of respect and gratitude to the Soviet people for their disinterested co-operation the government of Egypt in 1966 erected a monument in the town of Aswan as a symbol of Arab-Soviet friendship.

The Soviet people, who are rendering truly brotherly assistance to the Arab countries in developing their national economy and strengthening their defences, note with satisfaction that friendship between the USSR and the Arab countries is steadily strengthening from year to year.

The relations between the CPSU and the Soviet state, on the one hand, and the Arab national liberation movement and the liberated Arab countries, on the other, have now reached a stage of development when the community of vital interests in the common struggle against imperialism, for social progress, has given rise to and consolidated genuine equality and all-round co-operation at state and party levels with many Arab countries, and, among them, with the national democratic states and parties of a socialist orientation and with progressive anti-imperialist movements.

The Arab peoples' strivings towards peace, towards social progress and economic independence are the strong foundation upon which Soviet-Arab friendship is built. This friendship is of world-wide historic significance and is a potent mass weapon against imperialist expansion.

The actions of the USA, Britain and the FRG, who encouraged their puppets—the rulers of Israel, in their aggressive June 1967 war against their Arab neighbours revealed once more to all the nations the perfidious nature of the imperialists and roused the just anger of the many-millioned Arab masses. At the same time it was brought home once more to the Arabs that in the person of the USSR and other socialist countries they have true friends, a reliable support for their national independence.

Together with the fraternal socialist countries the USSR took the necessary steps to halt and condemn aggression. The Soviet Union raised this vital issue at the UN Security Council. On the demand of the Soviet Union an emergency meeting of the General Assembly was held. The USSR and other fraternal countries broke off diplomatic relations with Israel, who ignored the UN resolutions calling for a cease-fire. The USSR helped restore the defensive potential of the invaded Arab states, first and foremost Egypt and Syria, co-operation with whom is developing year by year.

In their speeches at the International Meeting of Com-



munist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in June 1969 the Communists of both the Arab countries and of Israel displayed a high sense of proletarian solidarity, which enabled that world forum of Communists to adopt an important Statement in support of the Arab peoples who had been the victims of the 1967 aggression.

In this special Statement, adopted on June 7, 1969, the Meeting strongly condemned the continued Israeli aggression against the Arab countries, which it qualified as "a gross violation of the national rights of the Arab peoples, including the lawful rights of the Arab people of Palestine, a gross violation of the UN Charter, which condemns aggression.

"In their just struggle against aggression the Arab peoples have the effective support of the socialist countries, primarily of the Soviet Union. In this struggle they are backed by the world communist movement, the national liberation forces and ever growing sections of the public in the capitalist countries.

"The Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties holds that peace and tranquility in this area can be established only provided Israeli troops are withdrawn from all occupied Arab territories and the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967 is fully implemented.

"The Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties appeals to all progressive forces throughout the world to increase their effective support for, and enhance their solidarity with, the Arab peoples in their just struggle."

Subsequent events show that the USA maintains the same one-sided, patently anti-Arab attitude. It is trying to introduce internecine dissension and strife into the Arab world and sunder their united front of resistance to Israeli aggression.

At the beginning of 1971 the Egyptian Government declared that it accepted the proposal of UN representative Jarring and was prepared to conclude a peace agreement with Israel, who was to withdraw its troops from the Arab territories it had seized. Egypt also proposed to take steps to resume navigation in the Suez Canal in the near future. Israel's rejection of Egypt's peaceful overtures exposes the aggressive nature of the Israeli rulers and shows the world who is preventing the establishment of peace in the Middle

East, and who is to blame for keeping the menace of war alive in this region.

At the same time the unsavory role of those who are encouraging the Israeli extremists—the role of American imperialism and international Zionism as a tool of aggressive imperialist circles—is becoming more and more obvious.

Tel Aviv would be well advised to take a more sober view of things. The advantages which the conquerors have gained as a result of the June 1967 war are, in the final analysis, illusory. The longer the achievement of a political settlement in the Middle East is dragged out, the stronger will be the protest of world public opinion, the hatred of the Arab peoples towards the aggressors and their patrons, and the greater will be the detriment which the rulers of Israel will be causing their own people, their own country.

A special declaration "For a Just and Lasting Peace in the Middle East" adopted at the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU in April 1971 expresses the firm conviction of representatives of the fourteen-million army of Soviet Communists "that the attempts of the imperialists and their henchmen to impose their *diktat* on the peoples of the Arab countries, to subvert the progressive regimes in the Middle East and to defeat the national liberation movement in that part of the world, are doomed to failure. The legitimate rights and interests of all Arab peoples, including the Arabs of Palestine, will triumph. The Israeli aggressors will be compelled to get out of the Arab territories seized by them in 1967. The guarantee of this is the unbending will of the Arab peoples, their striving for independence, freedom, peace and social progress, their close alliance with the peoples of the Soviet Union and those of the other socialist countries, with all anti-imperialist, peace-loving forces.

"The 24th Congress of the CPSU declares that, consistently pursuing the Leninist policy of international peace and friendship, the Soviet Union will continue to support the just cause of the Arab peoples who suffered from Israeli aggression, to support their efforts at regaining their violated rights, to secure a fair political settlement in the Middle East, and to protect the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 24th Congress of the CPSU, 1971, p. 329



The Congress appealed to the fraternal parties, to all peace-loving peoples and states to strengthen solidarity with the peoples of the Arab countries and render them active support in their struggle.

The resolution on the report of the CPSU Central Committee states: "The Congress, in approving the policy of the CC CPSU and the Soviet Government in the Middle East, instructs them to continue to pursue the line of utmost support for the Arab peoples subjected to aggression by Israel, which is being encouraged by US imperialism, a line of developing close co-operation with the progressive Arab states. The Soviet Union will seek a just political settlement in the area, which implies withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories, exercise by each state of its right to an independent existence, and also satisfying the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine."<sup>1</sup>

The Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with Egypt stands as proof of the Soviet Union's consistent and active foreign policy defined by the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU.

The partnership between the Soviet Union and the ARE, sealed for 15 years, is now set upon a more secure foundation. Broad prospects over a lengthy period have been opened up for the all-round development of co-operation and for safeguarding and developing the social and economic gains of the Egyptian people. Better preconditions are created for achieving a stable and just peace in the Middle East on the basis of the resolution of the Security Council of November 22, 1967, the quintessence of which is the demand for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab territories.

Progressive public opinion throughout the world correctly regards the Soviet-Egyptian treaty as a blow at the plans of international imperialism to overthrow the progressive regimes in the Arab countries.

The signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between Iraq and the USSR on April 9, 1972, was a new vivid testimony to the stability of Arab-Soviet friendship, and demonstrates once again the fruitfulness of friendly re-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

lations and co-operation between the Soviet Union and Iraq.

In the past few years following the 24th CPSU Congress, the efforts of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and their co-ordinated foreign policies have been effective in bringing about a remarkable turn in international relations toward implementing the principles of peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems. The cold war era is giving way to a new period of international relations, one of detente and willingness to establish co-operation between different nations and peoples. This has opened up realistic prospects for averting the threat of a world war, for full triumph of the policy of peaceful co-existence and for a radical reconstruction of international relations on its basis. Hundreds of millions of people in the world today have been given greater hopes for a life in peace.

The peace policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries meets the aspirations and interests of the working people of the whole world and enjoys their growing support. At the same time, this policy creates favourable conditions for successful socialist and communist construction, for the revolutionary struggle of the working class and the national liberation movement.

The key factor of these deep-going positive changes is the growing strength and unity, solidarity and co-ordinated actions of the socialist countries which are effectively implementing the Peace Programme outlined in the historic resolutions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU and of the congresses of other fraternal parties and in the documents of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties.

The Executive Committee Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yassir Arafat, said in a statement made in August 1973 that "in our day, the Soviet Union's leading role in world politics is as obvious as never before, and it is precisely by this growing role that the Soviet Union fulfils its internationalist duty, supports the struggle for national liberation and social progress throughout the world. Fighters against imperialism and colonialism, against reaction and war are turning their minds to the Soviet Union. The Arab peoples resisting the Israeli aggression regard the Soviet Union, all socialist countries as their staunch and loyal allies.



This is why imperialist and Zionist propagandists are circulating fabrications about an alleged collusion between the super-powers in an effort to drive a wedge between the Arab peoples and their true friends—the peoples of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. These designs, however, are doomed to failure.”

While working for an easing of tensions, the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community have invariably attached priority importance to stamping out the hotbed of war in the Middle East on the basis of complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied Arab lands, respect for the independence and inalienable rights of the states and peoples of this region, including the Arab people of Palestine.

There is not nor can there be any other way toward restoring peace in the Middle East.

Defence of inviolability and integrity of its territory is an inalienable right of any sovereign state.

The April 1973 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee reaffirmed "...the CPSU policy of support for the legitimate rights of the Arab peoples in their struggle against the Israeli aggression, for a settlement of the Middle East conflict in compliance with the well-known resolution of the UN Security Council”.

By frustrating every effort to establish a just peace in the Middle East and making continued provocative attacks on the neighbouring Arab countries, Israel has repeatedly caused critical situations in this area.

In October 1973, hostilities flared up between Israel and Arab states. The peoples of the world which received with a sigh of relief the process of detente which began recently have again been faced with dangerous developments.

The Soviet Government emphasised in its statement of October 8, 1973, that the hostilities resumed in the Middle East had thrown into still greater relief the "indisputable fact that elimination of the hotbed of constant tension and establishment of a secure and guaranteed peace for all the states and peoples of this area are unthinkable without Israel's full withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands and guarantees for the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

“Adhering to its principle of support for the peoples struggling for their freedom and independence, the Soviet Union consistently takes a stand as a loyal friend of the Arab states.”

World public opinion welcomed with great satisfaction the approval by the UN Security Council on October 22, 1973 of the draft resolution submitted jointly by the USSR and the USA to enforce a ceasefire and an immediate practical implementation of every provision of Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, on a political Middle East settlement.

The Soviet people who are devoted to the cause of peace and international solidarity have given their enthusiastic approval to the policy of the Soviet Government and the CPSU Central Committee aimed at securing a peace settlement in the Middle East on the basis of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied Arab lands, respect for the legitimate rights and interests of all the states and peoples of this area, including the Arab people of Palestine.

While pursuing its policy of peaceful co-existence, the Soviet Union is by no means inclined to take up a passive attitude to the aggressors. The imperialists should wisely remember that the Leninist principle of just wars is valid today also and that the Soviet Union will oppose resolutely any intrigues by the warmongers and give its all-out support to the just struggle waged by the Arab peoples.

Friendship and alliance with the forces of the Arab national liberation movement have always been and will continue to be a feature of Soviet foreign policy.